PROVINCIAL RESPONSE

to the
Resolutions of the 2013
Union of British Columbia Municipalities
Convention

BRITISH
COLUMBIA

Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development
January, 2014

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SR1 PACKAGING & PRINTED PAPER PRODUCT STEWARDSHIP

WHEREAS local governments have been offered the opportunity to continue providing collection services under the Multi-Material BC (MMBC) Packaging and Printed Paper (PPP) Stewardship program subject to confirmation by September 16, 2013 of their intent to participate;

AND WHEREAS while local governments remain supportive of extended producer responsibility for PPP products, there are fundamental concerns with the proposed program such as the decision-making timeline; the costs and financial risks of this program to local governments; the service delivery implications for residents; the feasibility of many of the standards being required; and the lack of necessary details;

AND WHEREAS many local governments would like to be active partners in the delivery of the PPP Stewardship program, it is imperative that additional work be undertaken between local governments and MMBC if a mutually beneficial contractual arrangement is to be reached:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government and MMBC provide an additional 90 days for local governments to properly clarify and consider the MMBC offer prior to the implementation of the MMBC PPP Stewardship Plan in May 2014;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the provincial government review the MMBC PPP Stewardship Plan, and require that the plan be revised to:

- address local governments' concerns with the implementation of the plan;
- ensure local governments' control of recycling programs in their communities;
- ensure producers take full financial responsibility for the collection and recycling of their waste;
- create meaningful market signals that encourage the reduction of packaging and innovation of better, more recyclable packaging; and
- address the issue of continuity of service;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that UBCM appoint a representative committee to negotiate with MMBC and the provincial government.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment

Under the Recycling Regulation (the Regulation) producers are responsible for collecting and recycling the products that they make and sell. On May 19, 2011, the PPP product category was added to the Regulation, providing producers with three years to consult with stakeholders, develop a plan and implement a stewardship program. Multi-Material BC (MMBC) has an approved product stewardship plan and is in the final stages of preparing to launch its program on May 19, 2014. MMBC represents a broad range of producers including businesses in the retail, grocery and food service sectors.

MMBC's product stewardship plan outlines how it will comply with the Regulation and meet the required performance standards. MMBC's plan commits to increasing the provincial recycling rate for PPP from approximately 52 percent to over 75 percent. To achieve this new recycling rate, MMBC has also committed to expand PPP collection services province wide through enhanced curbside blue box and depot options. MMBC has chosen to provide local governments with first right of refusal to receive financial incentives to deliver these enhanced collection services. Should local governments refuse the incentives, then MMBC will develop its own PPP collection system. MMBC's plan can be found on the Ministry of Environment (MoE) Product Stewardship website at http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/epd/recycling/pack/index.htm. More information on MMBC, including information for local governments who choose to receive the incentives and be service providers, can be found on the MMBC website at http://multimaterialbc.ca/.

With respect to the request in the resolution that the provincial government and MMBC provide local governments an additional 90 days to consider MMBC's incentive offer, the incentive offer and deadline are not set by the Province and, therefore, local governments need to negotiate this extension directly with MMBC. That said, ministry officials have discussed this with MMBC and it's the ministry's understanding that, at the request of local governments for more flexibility, MMBC has provided local governments with four options to consider:

1. Local governments can choose to accept MMBC's offer.

2. Local governments can choose to decline the offer. MMBC will be responsible to meet the performance requirements set out in the PPP stewardship plan.

3. Local governments currently providing PPP curbside collection services may decline the offer and notify MMBC and MoE that they wish to continue to provide the PPP curbside collection service at their own cost.

4. Local governments that did not accept the incentives and did not execute an agreement with MMBC by November 30, 2013, should notify MMBC that they need more time to consider MMBC's offer. Local governments are also asked to notify MoE and confirm continuity of service to the public until such time as the local government and MMBC execute an agreement. Should the local government subsequently decline to execute an agreement and indicate that MMBC should provide the service, the local government will agree to provide continuity of service to the public until MMBC can provide the service.

With respect to the request in the resolution for the Province to review and revise MMBC's stewardship plan to address performance measures, the ministry respectfully notes the extent to which MoE has facilitated the incorporation of greater performance measures into the existing plan prior to approval. The ministry notes your concerns regarding service levels and resident awareness, and encourage you to review the performance measures committed to within MMBC's approved stewardship plan. It is

MoE's expectation that service to British Columbia residents is maintained and, in some instances, improved given the expansion of materials to the blue box as well as additional service to geographical regions of BC. Appendix C of MMBC's plan itemizes commitments in accordance with provincial regulatory requirements. In addition, MoE is constantly monitoring plan performance and would appreciate any details including rationale that local governments can provide on plan/program performance or areas needing improvement.

All levels of government have a vested interest to ensure that all stewardship programs operate effectively and efficiently. As such, ensuring compliance with provincial regulatory requirements is one of MoE's principal objectives. MoE holds producers to the commitments outlined in their approved stewardship plans and works within its regulatory scope to ensure Extended Producer Responsibility programs in BC are meeting environmental and service level objectives.

In this light and to follow up on questions raised at the 2013 UBCM Convention, MoE held regional workshops in early November 2013 with local government staff to continue our work to engage and assist local governments in the transition to producer responsibility for PPP collection and recycling. Ministry staff is working with UBCM and local government staff across the province in arranging seven regional workshops across BC. More information on these workshops can be found on the MoE Product Stewardship website at http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/epd/recycling/pack/index.htm. Questions regarding the workshops should be directed to the Ministry of Environment.

The ministry would also like to offer any support to the new UBCM PPP committee initiated by the resolution. Ministry staff can provide a background presentation on our policy to make producers responsible, the Regulation and our compliance and enforcement strategy.

A1 FLOOD MANAGEMENT

WHEREAS the Province of British Columbia assumes incident command and provides on-site response for wildland interface fires;

AND WHEREAS within the province of British Columbia there are a large number of waterways subject to periodic, sudden and extensive flooding;

AND WHEREAS overland flooding has potentially profound adverse consequences in terms of life safety, private and public property interests, economic prosperity and public infrastructure;

AND WHEREAS the Province of British Columbia is the steward of the water resources within the province;

AND WHEREAS local authorities lack the mandate, statutory jurisdiction, financial and technical resources, equipment and staff necessary to provide emergency site response, mitigation and flood remediation works:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province of British Columbia take immediate and direct responsibility for flood management including but not limited to:

- identification of flood related hazards;
- remediation of stream channels so as to mitigate future flooding;
- monitoring of stream flows and levels in waterways posing a risk to life, safety or property;
- responding to sudden cessation of stream flows or reports of debris dams;
- executing tactical evacuations when warranted; and
- communicating with the Emergency Operations Centre.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Justice

The Province recognizes that flood protection is a shared responsibility and success is dependent upon support from all levels of government.

BC has taken on significant flood mitigation actions. Since 2008, the federal and provincial governments have partnered to protect communities across British Columbia by committing to 138 flood mitigation projects worth nearly $127 million in 60 communities through Emergency Management BC's Flood Protection Program.

The Ministry of Forests and Natural Resource Operations provides monitoring of hazards, stream flows and water courses to monitor potential threats and hazards. All information gathered is used by provincial agencies to provide ongoing support to local governments prior to, during and after a flood event and is typically shared with local authorities via Emergency Management BC coordination calls.

All local authorities' responsibilities with regards to emergency management are outlined in the *Emergency Program Act*. The Province supports local authorities in preparing for, responding to and recovering from emergency incidents and events. Local authorities and residents have "on the ground" knowledge of their respective areas. The Province looks to the local authorities to identify local risks and to develop and implement plans to lessen these risks.

In emergency situations, if a sudden cessation of stream flow occurs or changes in water characteristics are observed, citizens should call 9-1-1. For flooding or landslides, citizens should call the EMBC 24/7 Emergency Coordination Centre and evacuate or take required precautions.

Evacuations are the responsibility of the local government and must be initiated by on-site personnel.

The local authority can contact EMBC through the 24/7 Emergency Coordination Centre to request provincial support through the activation of a Regional Emergency

A2 REGIONAL INTEGRATED APPROACH TO FLOOD MANAGEMENT

WHEREAS many communities in the Lower Mainland face similar economic, environmental and/or social challenges with respect to mitigating flood risk, and significant efficiencies can be realized by working to address flood mitigation on a regional basis;

AND WHEREAS the Fraser Basin Council is preparing a business plan for a regional flood management strategy for the Lower Mainland to mitigate flood risk associated with sea level rise, storm surge and rivers;

AND WHEREAS other coastal and inland communities in BC may benefit and learn from a regional approach to flood mitigation in the Lower Mainland:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM support a regional integrated approach to flood management in the province, and advocate for dedicated multi-year senior government flood protection funding for associated studies and capital works that result from the program.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

Flood management is a shared responsibility and its success depends on the funding support and collaboration of all levels of government. The Province is prepared to contribute technical staff time, use of the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations' (Ministry) Fraser River hydraulic model and will consider cost-share funding of priority projects subject to budget availability.

The Province agrees that the Lower Mainland needs a regional flood management strategy to mitigate flood risks associated with sea level rise, storm surge and increased river flooding due to climate change. To be effective, the strategy must integrate the three major elements of flood management: floodplain management (hazard mapping and development planning), structural mitigation (diking and river channel management) and flood emergency planning, response and recovery. The Ministry is working with local stakeholders to develop this strategy.

While the Lower Mainland is a priority because of the population density and the billions of dollars of infrastructure exposed to flood hazards, other communities could benefit from a similar regional approach.

A3 EMERGENCY NOTIFICATIONS

WHEREAS the system of mass emergency and hazard notification in the province of BC is slow and ineffective, as demonstrated by Emergency Management BC's slow notification response times for two recent tsunami warnings;

AND WHEREAS fast and wide reaching emergency and hazard notification systems are proven to save lives, while slow and ineffective ones inevitably cost lives;

AND WHEREAS some communities have access to effective hazard and emergency mass notification systems, while others do not;

AND WHEREAS the technology and financial capacity needed to establish a world-class system of emergency and hazard notification province-wide are available:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM and FCM urge the provincial and federal governments to establish a world-class emergency and hazard mass notification system, including the following:

the establishment of a province-wide, all-hazard radio system by expanding Weatheradio Canada coverage, with Specific Area Message Encoding (SAME) protocols, to 100% of the populated areas in British Columbia by the end of 2014; and the establishment of a federal/provincial/local government cost-shared funding program with the purpose of ensuring that all of the communities in BC are able to establish mass notification systems that meet local needs.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Justice

Since 2006, the Province has had the Provincial Emergency Notification System, which upon receipt, begins immediate initiation of tsunami notifications from the National Tsunami Warning Center (formerly known as the West Coast and Alaska Tsunami Warning Centre) to potentially impacted coastal communities, major stakeholders, utilities owners and the media. Notifications are delivered via phone, email, fax and social media tools, such as Emergency Management BC's EmergencyInfoBC Twitter feed.

Emergency Management BC's notification system is a key tool in ensuring local authorities and public safety partners receive timely notification of any tsunami threats.

The Province, Environment Canada and the Canadian Coast Guard jointly maintain and operate Weatheradio transmitters that deliver Specific Area Message Encoding tsunami notifications to Weatheradios in potentially impacted areas. Environment Canada continues to expand its Weatheradio network along coastal British Columbia, recently installing transmitters on Haida Gwaii and in Prince Rupert.
Federal, provincial and territorial governments in Canada have been working toward a National Public Alerting System. It is envisioned that this all-hazards system would

provide emergency management organizations throughout Canada with a standard alerting capability to warn the public of imminent or unfolding hazards.

In the meantime, Emergency Management BC will continue working with our United States partners on other public subscription services. One alternative that has already been identified is for people to sign up to the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission for email alerts. This service will provide email notification for earthquake events over 6.5 in the Pacific.

A4 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

WHEREAS the recent Court of Appeal decision in Schlenker v. Torgrimson, 2013 BCCA 9 broadened the interpretation of the conflict of interest provisions under sections 100 and 101 of the *Community Charter*, determining that a local government elected official who also serves on the board of directors of a nonprofit organization is deemed to have an indirect pecuniary conflict of interest when voting on grants offered by the local government to non-profit organizations;

AND WHEREAS this broadened interpretation of the conflict of interest provisions has significant implications for those local government elected officials who also serve on the board of a non-profit organization, since contravention of the conflict of interest provisions could result in disqualification from local government elected office:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province work with UBCM to identify a remedy that clarifies the responsibilities and suggested conduct of local government elected officials who serve on the boards of non-profit organizations as appointed elected officials, so that they may continue to serve in both positions concurrently, without fear of disqualification from local government elected office due to conflict of interest.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development

Government is interested in supporting local governments and local government elected officials when there is uncertainty around implications of new court decisions.

Ministry staff worked with UBCM and Local Government Management Association (LGMA) staff in support of a bulletin published on August 21, 2013, about the BCCA court decision, providing information and practical steps for local governments and their elected officials to consider.

As it monitors the implications of the decision, the Ministry is committed to continuing to work with UBCM and LGMA to discuss the issue and identify what further responses to the decision may be appropriate.

B1 USE OF ELECTRONIC MAIL

WHEREAS the current definition of the word "mail", as contained in Section 29 of the *Interpretation Act*, restricts a local government's means for forwarding statutorily prescribed notices and other communications to regular mail delivered by way of Canada Post, and does not recognize the efficacy that more modern electronic means of communication allow;

AND WHEREAS local governments are being called upon by their residents and business owners to introduce electronic means of communication for reasons related to better service, sustainability and cost containment:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government enact legislation that allows local governments to electronically mail statutorily prescribed notices and other communications and documents.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development

In spring 2013, government responded to past UBCM resolutions by enacting legislation to allow for electronic delivery of municipal property tax notices. Some municipalities implemented voluntary electronic delivery of property tax notices for the 2013 tax year.

Based on stakeholder consultations and previous UBCM resolutions, government determined that electronic delivery of property tax notices offers the greatest opportunity for achieving cost-savings and efficiencies. Whereas other statutorily prescribed notices are typically delivered to one or a few residents, property tax notices must be mailed to *every* property owner annually. Expanding electronic delivery of statutorily prescribed notices would require further consideration and consultation by government.

B2 REDUCED LIABILITY FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS IN CONDUCTING BUILDING INSPECTIONS

WHEREAS the Province of British Columbia has recently updated the *Limitation Act* to be generally consistent with limitation-period related requests made by both the UBCM and the Municipal Insurance Association of BC (MIABC), which is a significant improvement to the previous legislation;

AND WHEREAS the *Local Government Act* [Chapter 323, Section 290] provides for specific liability exceptions to local governments in certain circumstances, and in particular for the approval of building plans submitted by a professional engineer or architect:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province of British Columbia consider changes to appropriate legislation to further protect local governments from liability exposure in conducting building inspections when field reviews are carried out by professional engineers or architects registered in British Columbia.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development

Local governments have advocated for a change to the nature of liability apportionment arising from municipal oversight of building construction for many years.

While UBCM acknowledges that the Province has taken some significant steps in addressing local government liability issues with the enactment of a new *Limitation Act* in 2012, they have continued concerns with the impact of joint and several liability flowing from local government's role in approving the design and construction of buildings and undertaking inspections. In past policy papers, UBCM has taken the position that local government liability should be apportioned on a proportionate basis, such that individuals and organizations would be responsible for the consequences of their own actions and not for the actions of others and that liability should be limited to the degree of responsibility of the participant.

The *Negligence Act* provides for the apportionment of damages on the basis of joint and several liability. Joint and several liability is a mechanism to ensure that the plaintiff may recover from all defendants. The purpose of joint and several apportionment is to ensure that the plaintiff does not ultimately bear the loss for the negligent act of another. This has resulted in increased local government risk aversion to avoid disproportionate damage awards being assessed in cases of building failures. Some local governments have responded by considering withdrawing from the area of building code inspections and enforcement, particularly in the area of complex structures.

This resolution advocates for a more limited approach to proportionate liability within the context of limiting local government liability exposure in conducting building inspections when field reviews are carried out by professional engineers or architects. However, this approach would result in a shift of liability to one set of parties (professional architects and engineers) for a broader spectrum of possible building faults than is currently contemplated in s. 290 of the *Local Government Act*. Section 290 currently limited the responsibility of certified professionals to plan review which is directly related and limited to their function and expertise. Additionally, this proposal does not address the need to fairly apportion responsibility across all parties involved in design and construction. Government is focused on addressing the issue of proportionality through system improvements that are intended to result in improved construction and safety outcomes.

In this regard, and in addition to the recent amendments to the *Limitation Act* to reduce the ultimate limitation period, the Office of Housing and Construction Standards is continuing to work with industry and local governments to address issues of roles and responsibilities, competencies, minimum qualifications for building officials and residential builders, approval of alternative solutions and a proposed random audit of construction projects to assist in assessing risks. Government encourages UBCM to continue to work with the Province in addressing these important issues.

B3 ELECTOR APPROVAL OF BOUNDARY EXTENSIONS

WHEREAS Section 20 of the *Local Government Act* allows a council to request the extension of a municipality to include land not in a municipality and the council must obtain the approval of the electors of the municipality in relation to the proposed extension;

AND WHEREAS municipal boundary extensions into electoral areas are done without the approval of the electors within the affected electoral areas:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government be requested to amend the *Local Government Act* so that the council must also obtain the approval of the electors of the affected electoral area in relation to the proposed extension.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development

The *Local Government Act* provisions relating to elector approval and assent are intended to establish elected officials' accountability to those electors they are mandated to represent. It would be inappropriate for a municipal council to seek approval of the electors outside their jurisdiction. As well, there would be concerns about the interests of the entire electoral area potentially outweighing the interests of those directly affected by a boundary extension.

Government expects a proponent municipality to consult with the regional district to determine whether a proposal impacts any regional district services. In cases where there is a significant impact, the Ministry generally requires mitigation to reduce the impact on those regional district services and the communities they serve.

Municipalities and regional districts are not limited to reacting to specific extension proposals. They can set up a framework for processes and protocols to manage boundary extensions. This would establish a common understanding and set mutual expectations for the parties. Such an agreement could also establish timelines, if and when consultation with rural residents is appropriate, approaches to mitigating impacts and possible future boundary extension locations for reference.

B4 EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

WHEREAS there is a need for well-trained experienced personnel to deal with catastrophic emergency events that may occur in their communities:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province of British Columbia through Emergency Management BC be asked to continue to provide funding for training programs for existing and future emergency personnel, by 2014.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Justice

Emergency Management BC recognizes the importance of supporting and providing funding for training for emergency management personnel and Public Safety Lifeline volunteer groups. The Province currently provides $950,000 in annual training funding to support Emergency Social Services, Search and Rescue and Emergency Management programs throughout the Province. This level of funding, which matches the 2008/2009 levels, has been in place for the last three fiscal years.

To ensure continued support for training for Emergency Social Services, Search and Rescue, and Emergency Management programs, Emergency Management BC will continue to apply this funding in the fiscal year 2014/2015.

B5 SEARCH & RESCUE SQUAD FUNDING

WHEREAS search and rescue squads in British Columbia are not directly funded through the Province, each year they are required to apply for gaming grants which are not guaranteed and amounts vary;

AND WHEREAS search and rescue squads provide an extremely valuable service in our vast province and consistent annual core funding, including equipment costs should be provided by the Province:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the provincial government to directly fund 100% of the costs for search and rescue squad services.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Justice

The Province is proud of the 2,500 active Search and Rescue (SAR) members in British Columbia and works closely with our partner, the BC SAR Association, to identify challenges and successes that are encountered by these teams. Government is aware that BC's SAR Association is currently working to develop a proposed 'Alternative Funding Model for SAR in British Columbia', which it intends to present to government in the near future and look forward to seeing that and having further discussions with them on the topic.

BC's 80 SAR teams are a critical resource in our Province and that's why in fiscal year 2012/13 government provided $7 million in gaming grant funding to SAR organizations and other public safety lifeline volunteers. Currently, this funding appears to meet the needs of SAR teams and the Province is not aware of any funding gaps.

When any SAR team is activated they are granted an operational task number which provides all SAR volunteers with third party liability and WorkSafe BC coverage, reimbursement of operational expenses and repair and/or replacement of equipment in accordance with current Emergency Management BC policy.

B6 RCMP SMALL MUNICIPALITY DETACHMENTS

WHEREAS RCMP detachments in small municipalities through their presence, liaison and regular patrols deter criminal activity in these communities and surrounding areas, supplying a sense of security to our citizens;

AND WHEREAS RCMP are presently investigating the cost cutting measures of closing small municipality detachments in favour of centralizing their staff into larger urban detachments, some over an hour's travel time from the current detachment location in the small municipality;

AND WHEREAS this would leave small municipalities vulnerable to increased criminal activity, slow response times and lack of security:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM call upon the provincial government to liaise with RCMP and affected small municipalities to maintain the status quo and retain all small municipality detachments.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Justice

The Province recognizes that police visibility is a priority for small municipalities across British Columbia.

In these fiscally challenging times, it is increasingly imperative to find innovative solutions to meet public expectations for the delivery of police services and address increasing costs. Government has set this as a priority for the RCMP.

The RCMP must balance community safety needs while ensuring that legislative requirements, such as officer safety and well being, are met.

The RCMP is reviewing existing service delivery to implement new policing models, where appropriate, that will improve policing in remote and rural areas while ensuring member and public safety.

B7 RURAL POLICING

WHEREAS it is generally recognized that police work in BC is heavily urban focused; however increasing the number of general duty municipal officers should not come at the expense of a reasonable level of police service in rural communities;

AND WHEREAS there has been little or no increase in the number of provincially funded general duty officers over the past several years, compromising police service levels in many rural communities throughout BC:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Government of BC review its rural police resourcing models to ensure that adequate resources are available to properly police rural communities.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Justice

Under the *Police Act*, the Minister of Justice is responsible for overseeing policing and ensuring that an adequate and effective level of policing and law enforcement is maintained throughout the Province, both in municipalities and provincial areas.

The RCMP is reviewing existing service delivery to implement new policing models, where appropriate, that will improve policing in remote and rural areas while ensuring member and public safety.

The Ministry will also review the structure of Policing in the Province and consider models of service delivery as one of the action items identified as part of the BC Policing and Community Safety Plan.

B8 FIRE DEPARTMENT RESPONSE TO HIGHWAY ACCIDENTS

WHEREAS municipal fire departments in communities that have a major highway(s) passing through them respond to highway incidents;

AND WHEREAS the cost of attending these highway incidents is borne solely by the taxpayers within the taxing jurisdiction:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government be requested to develop a program with ICBC to reimburse fire departments that respond to highway incidents which involve owners from within the fire department's taxing jurisdiction.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

ICBC collects premiums for expected claims based on what ICBC's customers are legally required to pay should they be responsible for a crash.

Any legislative change to make BC motorists responsible for fire department charges would expose ICBC to additional costs which would need to be recovered from BC drivers through insurance premiums and this would put upward pressure on insurance rates.

On September 5th, 2013 BCUC approved the basic rate change on an interim basis effective November 1, 2013, and will make a final decision after a public hearing process that will continue into the New Year. Additional information can be found on the BCUC web site at: www.bcuc.com

ICBC supports communities in other ways through payment of grants in lieu of taxes and through its loss prevention and road safety programs. These road safety programs include partnerships with municipalities for local road improvements that improve road safety.

B10 RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

WHEREAS restorative justice programs or services (restorative justice programs) have been operational in British Columbia without defined protocols and program standards since the Community Accountability Programs initiative in March 1998 under the Victim Services and Crime Prevention Division of what is now the Ministry of Justice;

AND WHEREAS restorative justice programs are perceived as community-based and as a result not required to be under protocols and program standards:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request that the Victim Services and Crime Prevention Division of the Ministry of Justice create a working group including representation from community-based restorative justice programs, the RCMP "E" Division and other stakeholders to act on the recommendations from the report, "A Criminal Justice System for the 21st Century," to develop protocols and program/service standards for restorative justice programs, in concert with a review of existing funding structures to provide recommendations for sustainable restorative justice program funding.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Justice

Since 2004, community based initiatives involved with the Ministry of Justice's Community Accountability Program (CAP) have been required to abide by Guidelines set out in the *Community Accountability Programs: Information Package* and in their CAP contracts with the Ministry. These include requirements such as maintaining confidentially, obtaining criminal record checks for volunteers and providing a complaints process for participants.

In 2011, the Ministry provided funding and support to Community Justice Initiatives Association to produce *Walking the Talk: Developing Ethics Frameworks for the Practice of Restorative Justice*. This resource has been well received by communities and aims to assist restorative justice practitioners in going through the process of determining the values that will guide the work of their organization.

Additionally, in order to promote responsive and effective community-based restorative justice approaches, in May 2013 the Ministry completed a series of regional trainings for contracted CAP in partnership with Community Justice Initiatives Association.

The training goals were to ensure consistent, quality service delivery by CAP groups, with particular attention to victims' needs and issues, to increase the capacity of BC CAP groups to accept referrals of increased diversity and complexity and to provide opportunities for regional networking among agencies.

The government has committed in "*White Paper on Justice Reform part two: A Timely, Balanced Justice System*" to explore opportunities for restorative justice within existing resources and to expand restorative justice if additional funding becomes available.

Recommendations in "*A Criminal Justice System for the 21st Century*" regarding program standards will be considered moving forward.

B11 REGULATIONS FOR MOTORIZED MOBILITY AIDS

WHEREAS motorized scooters are unclearly defined under provincial legislation and there are no licencing requirements for scooters and scooter operators;

AND WHEREAS without regulations to control when and where scooters are used and appropriate training and testing of scooter operators, the safety of all motorists, businesses and pedestrians are at risk:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM support regulating the use of motorized mobility aids (including motorized wheelchairs and scooters), as well as the licencing of these aids and their operators, and that UBCM encourage the provincial government to implement these provisions under the Motor Vehicle Act.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

The Ministry is working with ICBC, Office of the Superintendent of Motor Vehicles, the Coroner's Office and the Ministries of Justice and Health, to research best practices in other jurisdictions and develop a framework for the safe operation of motorized scooters and personal mobility devices. The Ministry is also reviewing the *Motor Vehicle Act* to determine whether amendments are required to support safe operation of motorized scooter and personal mobility devices. Any framework will include an educational component for users.

B12 COASTAL FERRIES: FISCAL FAIRNESS & LONG TERM STRATEGY

WHEREAS the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) has requested that the Province abandon any plans to increase fares and/or reduce core ferry service levels, as such actions would have irreparable negative impacts on the economic well-being of Coastal British Columbia;

AND WHEREAS the UBCM has called on the Province to implement legislation that recognizes our coastal ferry services as essential extensions of our public highway system and ensures fiscal fairness between BC's terrestrial and marine highway systems;

AND WHEREAS the UBCM has requested that the Province develop a ferry services strategy that supports the sustainability of island economies and the coastal ferry service;

AND WHEREAS over the past year the Province has (a) failed to implement a ferry services strategy, (b) allowed the rapid escalation of ferry fares, and (c) begun to implement a plan to slash services to ferry dependent communities:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM continue to request the Province to:

- Work co-operatively with coastal communities on implementing a long term strategy for the ferry system that supports the strengthening and sustainability of island economies and the coastal ferry service;
- Implement legislation that recognizes the ferry system as an extension of our highway system and ensures fiscal fairness between the marine and terrestrial components of our highway system; and
- Freeze ferry fares and service levels at 2013 levels until such time as the legislation and strategy are implemented.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

The Province knows how important it is to keep coastal ferry fares affordable and has taken significant measures to address this need.

Following the Ferry Commissioner's review of the *Coastal Ferry Act*, government amended the Act to help reduce the pressure on fares. The amendments give the Commissioner more flexibility to determine the amount of revenue needed to sustain operations and support ongoing investment, as well as additional responsibility to oversee the costs of providing the ferry service.

As the UBCM Resolutions Committee notes, the Province has also committed an additional $79.5 in taxpayer funding and challenged BC Ferries to find an additional $15 million in efficiencies to 2016, over and above the $39 million already identified by the Ferry Commissioner.

This year, taxpayers are expected to contribute over $200 million to support coastal ferries. Further, this government has committed to direct one-third of the Prosperity Fund, up to $1 billion, to support coastal ferries.

While the Province supports the current coastal ferry model, government is actively looking for solutions that balance the needs of ferry users, taxpayers and the financial stability of our ferry system. The Province is committed to a vision of a ferry service that connects coastal communities in an affordable, efficient and sustainable manner.

Last year, the Province conducted an extensive public consultation process to discuss the short-term challenges and strategies to achieve the long-term vision for coastal ferries. Forty meetings were held in 30 coastal communities, welcoming over 2,000 participants.

As part of a larger strategy, service adjustments will be implemented to ensure the long-term sustainability of the ferry system. The Province will seek further public input this fall regarding these service changes and the long-term vision.

The Province will continue to work with coastal and island communities to address the challenges facing the coastal ferry system.

B13 TRANS CANADA HIGHWAY UPGRADES

WHEREAS the two lane Trans Canada Highway, built in 1962, is a critical economic link to the Pacific Rim but has become inadequate for both commercial and private travellers, too often resulting in deaths or severe injuries as well as road closures that are affecting the BC economy;

AND WHEREAS the provincial and federal governments have not committed the resources necessary to upgrade and improve the Trans Canada Highway, which is necessary to prevent this carnage and economic impact:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM urge the provincial Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to take immediate steps to partner with the federal government to provide enough resources to complete the four lane upgrade of the Trans Canada Highway to the Alberta border, within the next ten years, ensuring fewer accidents and road closures.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

The Province has committed $650 million over the next 10 years to continue four-laning the Trans Canada Highway between Kamloops and the Alberta Border. This highway is a critical link from the Pacific Gateway to the rest of North America and these upgrades will improve safety and mobility while providing significant economic benefits.

Over the past 10 years, the Province has partnered with the federal government to invest $700 million on Trans Canada Highway upgrades. The Province will be entering into negotiations this fall with the federal government to identify opportunities to partner on new projects and get the maximum benefit for the Province's $650 million investment.

The Trans Canada Highway traverses some of the most complex and challenging terrain in Western Canada and four-laning will require extensive and detailed engineering. The highway is a priority for upgrading and this investment will accelerate the rate of four-lane upgrading along this important corridor.

B14 REVIEW OF BC ROAD MAINTENANCE STANDARDS

WHEREAS northern BC residents consistently declare road maintenance fails to meet travellers' requirements and that standards have deteriorated since privatization of road maintenance;

AND WHEREAS road maintenance contractors consistently meet their contractual obligations and provide service according to provincial maintenance standards:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM call upon the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure to revise the provincial standards for road maintenance for future road maintenance contracts, to meet public safety needs.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure's (Ministry) performance specifications for highway maintenance are comparable to other jurisdictions across North America. The Ministry reviews current practices nationally and internationally to ensure our standards remain current with the best practices in highway maintenance. Through this process of continuous review the Ministry ensures its maintenance specifications are consistent with industry best practices and provide a high level of service and traveller safety, while providing fiscally responsible road maintenance.

The Ministry is committed to holding our contractors responsible for the services they are contracted to deliver through monitoring and auditing against the Ministry's strict specifications. The Ministry monitors daily and regularly audits their performance to ensure they are meeting or exceeding the Ministry's requirements and work with contractors to quickly resolve any issues that arise. The Ministry is always available to meet with local governments to address specific issues individual communities would like to discuss.

B15 PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

WHEREAS many rural communities in Northern British Columbia do not have any public transit or adequate taxi service;

AND WHEREAS the absence of public transportation and suitable taxi service in these rural communities places them at a distinct disadvantage as their citizens have no opportunity to use public transportation within or between communities:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request that the Province of BC implement a public transportation strategy and establish solutions leading to the sustainability of both public transit and taxis in all rural communities.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

Government is aware of the importance of public transit and taxi services for our communities, particularly in central and northern British Columbia. The provincial government has been able to provide one of the highest levels of transit funding in Canada. As highlighted in the 2012 BC Transit Independent Review, BC Transit has been very successful offering services to small communities that, elsewhere in Canada, would generally not have public transit. This support has enabled nearly 90 percent of all BC residents to have access to some form of public transit. Government continues to maintain the view that local issues relating to public transit and taxis in rural communities are better addressed by local governments and service providers.

Communities wishing to establish new transit services can discuss preliminary options with BC Transit or request a formal feasibility study. Additionally, the Province, UBCM and BC Transit have established a working group aimed at enhancing the transit partnership as recommended by the BC Transit Independent Review and communities are encouraged to participate in this group. Please contact UBCM staff for further information.

If there is a demand for taxi or other commercial passenger transportation services, potential service providers can apply to the Registrar of Passenger Transportation for a license to deliver those services.

B16 PST LEGISLATION IMPACTS TO DISTRICT ENERGY UTILITIES

WHEREAS district energy utilities provide sustainable energy sources for British Columbians;

AND WHEREAS the reimplementation of the Provincial Sales Tax (PST) as proposed creates inequities for district energy utility providers that will impact their ability to compete on the basis of their respective system efficiencies, technical merit, and carbon emissions:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Ministry of Finance reinstate the PST in an equitable manner that will (i) provide exemption or reimbursement of PST charges on energy purchased for the purpose of generating energy for resale, (ii) introduce former exemptions on Production Machinery and Equipment for equipment purchased by district energy systems, and (iii) maintain, as per the former PST regulations, the PST exemption on the sale of heat to residential district energy consumers.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Finance

The PST applies to the same goods and services which were subject to tax under the previous PST.

There was no PST exemption under the previous PST for energy purchased for the purpose of generating energy (or any other good) for resale. No change to this policy is under consideration.

All production machinery and equipment exemptions under the former PST are again available under the re-implemented PST, including the exemption formerly available for district energy systems operated by a local government body or local government corporation to generate electricity or electricity and heat at a cogeneration plant.

The PST exemption on the purchase of heat by residential consumers has been re-implemented. Heat, steam or cooling produced through a district energy system is exempt from PST when purchased for residential use in a residential dwelling.

B17 PST TAX EXEMPTION REQUEST

WHEREAS under previous tax programs, local governments received a more substantial rebate;

AND WHEREAS with the reintroduction of the GST/PST program, local governments will not earn rebates under the PST, which will cause an unreasonable financial burden to local governments:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that local governments be exempted from paying PST.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that such exemption or rebate should not result in any reduction of grants in lieu or any other monies presently directed from the provincial government to local governments, nor should this be seen as an opportunity to download additional responsibilities to local governments without providing sufficient funding to compensate for such additional responsibilities.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Finance

Local governments pay no more in PST under the *Provincial Sales Tax Act* than was previously paid under previous PST under the *Social Service Tax Act*.

The provincial rebate provided to municipalities under the harmonized sale tax (HST) of 75 percent was to ensure that, on average, municipalities paid no more in tax under HST than was previously paid under the PST.

The PST applies to the same goods and services which were subject to tax under the previous PST. There was no general exemption from PST for local governments. There was an exemption for machinery and equipment obtained by local governments for electricity generation or generation of electricity and heat at a cogeneration plant and this exemption was re-instated with the re-implementation of the PST.

British Columbia's policy regarding the general application of sales tax to local governments is, with limited exceptions, consistent with most other provincial governments, including those which have harmonized their sales taxes with the federal GST. No change to this policy is under consideration.

B18 SMALL COMMUNITY GRANT INDEXING

WHEREAS small communities are tasked with supplying the same basic services as those local governments with greater resources, and the Small Community Grant provided by the Province acknowledges and attempts to equalize the financial strain;

AND WHEREAS the costs associated with providing these services rise with the cost of living:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the provincial government to reflect such inflation in the Small Community Grant allocation.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development

In the past, the Province indexed transfers to local governments. However, this practice ended because it is very difficult to devise an indexing formula that anticipated all eventualities and fairly represented the interests of both orders of government over the long term. Thus, the Province stopped indexing in the mid 1990's.

Since that time, increases in grant funding have usually been undertaken as part of a dialogue between the Province and local government and normally discussed in the context of broader economic and financial circumstances. This dialogue has usually resulted in generous funding for local governments. For example, since 2005, the total funding for small community grants has increased by a factor much greater than the Consumer Price Index.

B19 INFRASTRUCTURE GRANTS FOR SMALL MUNICIPALITIES

WHEREAS small local governments throughout British Columbia are experiencing significant challenges providing its citizens with adequate municipal infrastructure and facilities;

AND WHEREAS due to the small tax base of these local governments, they are unable to fund the cost of significant infrastructure projects and upgrades and as a result are falling behind their larger counterparts in providing its citizens with adequate infrastructure and facilities;

AND WHEREAS due to the small tax base of these local governments they often cannot fund the annual financing payments required to undertake the majority of these significant infrastructure and facility projects:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial and federal governments implement infrastructure grant programs that recognize the limited capacity of small and rural local governments, and that facilitate efficient and fair access to infrastructure funding for all BC local governments.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development

The Ministry recognizes the challenges that smaller local governments face in funding significant infrastructure projects.

Funding programs such as the Small Community Grant, Regional District Grant and the Towns for Tomorrow program were developed in direct response to the needs of smaller local governments. The Traffic Fine Revenue Sharing program also considers the needs of communities with populations of fewer than 5,000 by providing reductions in the police tax. Ministry staff is working to update the Development Finance Choices guide, to assist local governments in identifying and designing finance tools for growth-related infrastructure.

The federal Gas Tax Fund has provided 100 percent of project funding in the Community Works Fund, as well as the pooled funding programs – the General Strategic Priorities Fund and the Innovation Fund eliminating the need for local governments to provide financial contributions to complete projects under this program.

The Ministry continues to work on developing funding programs that meet the needs of local governments in British Columbia. With a finite amount of funding available, the Ministry tries to balance the financial challenges faced by smaller local governments with the need to maximize the benefits of capital programs to as many local governments as possible. There are not any capital funding programs accepting applications at this time. However, the Ministry is currently discussing a future federal/provincial long-term infrastructure plan with the federal government and the ongoing structure and delivery options of the permanent Gas Tax fund. Outside of these two programs, the Ministry will clearly communicate any new program decisions to UBCM and local governments.

The Ministry is very interested in supporting local governments in providing effective service delivery – reviewing spending and reflecting on service provision, including what services they are providing now, what services they should be providing, the level of service provided and how to most efficiently provide these services.

The Ministry is supporting this through the development of asset management and long-term financial management best management practices in partnership with stakeholders.

B20 OTHER GOVERNMENT GRANT PROGRAMS NOT WORKING

WHEREAS local government expends time and resources when applying for grant programs, and the application process essentially pits communities one against the other resulting in winners and losers;

AND WHEREAS local government sees the current granting program structure used by senior levels of government as lacking essential criteria required to make fair and equitable decisions during the evaluation of applications for funding:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that other orders of government review their current granting programs to include consultation with local government in formulating a new approach in granting.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development

The government of British Columbia recognizes that submitting an application for a funding program requires local government resources. Pooled funding through application based programs ensures the best use of limited senior government funding. Programs are designed to maximize outcomes supporting broad goals and objectives from all levels of government. Program applications and application guides identify all the necessary information required to submit a successful application. Robust assessment tools are developed in conjunction with the application in order for ministry staff to assess projects using the information provided by the applicant that support a merit-based approach.

The Province has a strong working relationship with UBCM and continues to involve UBCM in discussions regarding the development of future funding programs. The Province is still waiting for the federal government to provide more details on the new Building Canada Fund and/or to initiate negotiations for this important source of infrastructure funding. The Province will consider new program aspects as raised through the UBCM consultation process and other engagements.

B21 REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

WHEREAS reporting requirements for provincial and federal funding programs are excessive;

AND WHEREAS small communities do not have the financial means or staffing capacity to adequately meeting reporting requirements:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial and federal governments streamline their reporting requirements and provide assistance in completing reports for smaller communities.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development

It is recognized by the Ministry that smaller communities often suffer from a shortage of resources and capacity in dealing with infrastructure grant reporting requirements. However, both the federal and provincial governments are mandated to deliver these programs in a manner that meets identified goals and objectives as well as fulfilling audit requirements. There are mandatory information and data requirements that ensure that the overall integrity of the programs is maintained. It is understood that a balance must be achieved.

The Small Community Grant, Regional District Grant and the Towns for Tomorrow grant programs and their reporting requirements were specifically developed to address the needs of smaller local governments.

The Ministry will consider the financial and staffing capacity of small local governments when discussing a future federal/provincial long-term infrastructure plan with the federal government and the ongoing structure and delivery options of the permanent Gas Tax fund.

Ministry staff maintains expert knowledge of infrastructure programs that the Ministry manages and can provide support, guidance and advice on completing reporting requirements. Communities experiencing challenges with requirements are welcome to contact program area staff.

B22 SHORT TERM BORROWING LIMIT

WHEREAS the short term borrowing upper limit has been set at $50 per capita since 1993;

AND WHEREAS, according to the Bank of Canada's online Inflation Calculator, inflation has reduced this value to the equivalent of $35.40 in 1993 dollars:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government be requested to introduce legislation to amend the short term borrowing limit from $50 per capita to $75 per capita.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development

The Ministry has completed review of the $50 per capita limit set for short-term capital borrowing (STCB) and concluded at this time that it is not appropriate to increase the limit. With modernized financing tools now available to local governments (such as liabilities under agreement and the assent free liability zone) STCB is becoming an increasingly redundant financing tool. In 2012, there were only five requests for STCB for all local governments in British Columbia.

B23 PROVINCIAL PRISONER COST RECOVERY

WHEREAS provincial prisoners held in municipally owned cells are the financial responsibility of the Province;

AND WHEREAS the dollar amount recovered from the Province to hold provincial prisoners does not reflect the true cost paid by the local government to provide this service and the cost difference becomes a burden to the local government and their residents:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM engage the Ministry of Justice and Attorney General in discussions in order to achieve an agreement on an equitable recovery for provincial prisoner cost.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Justice

The Ministry of Justice continues to reimburse municipalities equitably for housing provincial prisoners in police lockups while they are attending court or awaiting transport to correctional facilities.

Police lock-ups in British Columbia house both municipal and provincial prisoners. Municipal prisoners are the financial responsibility of the municipality. Provincial prisoners, which are paid for under the Keep of Prisoners Program, account for approximately 15 percent of reported admissions into police lock-ups. 12 percent of reported admissions into police lock-ups are remanded after admission.

The Keep of Prisoners rate of approximately $175 per day is reasonable and is sufficient to ensure that the immediate needs of prisoners are met.

For the past 10 years, Keep of Prisoners has remained an effective, equitable and accountable program that operates in collaboration with police and local governments.

Staff in the Ministry of Justice are available to discuss the Keep of Prisoners Program with local government representatives.

B24 INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS NEGOTIATIONS

WHEREAS the arbitration process laid out in the *Fire and Police Services Collective Bargaining Act* does not appear to be in the best interest of individual local governments;

AND WHEREAS the process appears to be heavily weighted to the interest of the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) and the results of the arbitrator's decisions are escalating career fire fighter wages and benefits beyond what many local governments can afford and does not recognize the ratepayer's ability to pay or afford:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM call on the provincial government to amend the *Fire and Police Services Collective Bargaining Act* to provide direction to arbitrators to more fairly represent and consider the individual interest and abilities of local government.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training and Minister Responsible for Labour

The purpose of the *Fire and Police Services Collective Bargaining Act* (Act) is to provide access for unions and employers to binding interest arbitration to resolve a collective bargaining dispute. By proceeding to arbitration, the parties are able to maintain the ability to engage in face-to-face negotiations and avoid a strike or lockout which would interrupt the delivery of services critical to the protection of human life and property. The Act has achieved this objective.

The Act contains specific provisions establishing criteria to which an arbitrator must have regard in making his/her decision. While these criteria are purposely broad and allow the parties to raise before the arbitrator the appropriate weight to be given to each of them, they do include specific direction for the arbitrator to consider the "interest and the welfare of the community" (i.e., section 4(6)(e)). In addition, where a party applies to the Minister for direction to proceed to arbitration in a particular dispute, it is free to request that the Minister consider specifying additional terms of reference.

It should be noted that in applying the Act, arbitrators are to have regard to the terms and conditions of employment for other groups of the employer's employees. As a result, employers should be mindful about the outcome of freely negotiated collective agreements when engaging in collective bargaining with police and fire unions.

At this time, the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training and Minister Responsible for Labour has no plans to amend the Act. The Ministry will continue to actively monitor collective bargaining in the sectors covered by the Act.

B25 DRINKING WATER APPROVAL PROCESS

WHEREAS the municipality was issued a Public Health Order under s. 26 of the *Drinking Water Protection Act* to treat the Village's finished water supply to a specific standard, and to achieve that standard, the Village of Harrison Hot Springs must construct a water treatment facility, possibly requiring a loan authorization bylaw and approval of the electorate;

AND WHEREAS if the order had been issued under s. 25 of the Act, public approval would not be required:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that any borrowing made necessary by an order issued by a ministry official or health authority be exempt from a public approval process.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development

Currently, the only exemption from obtaining electoral approval for necessary water works projects is provided through the Municipal Liabilities Regulation (*Community Charter*) under sections 4 & 8.

The intent of the regulation(s) is to eliminate the requirement for elector approval when there is an immediate public health hazard. Under the *Drinking Water Protection Act (DWPA)*, an order issued under s. 25 is directed towards an existing drinking water health hazard or a significant risk of an imminent drinking water health hazard. An order issued under s. 26 reflects contraventions of the DWPA and does not necessarily reflect an immediate public health hazard.

The Ministry has been working with the Ministry of Health and the Health Authorities through the Drinking Water Leadership Council to further identify this issue and ensure that all parties understand the purpose of the public assent/loan authorization process, the role of the Liabilities Regulation(s) and the impact orders under the DWPA have on local governments. Part of this work is to ensure that orders issued by Drinking Water Officers (Health Authorities) appropriately reflect the respective public health issue and further support the affected local government to implement the order appropriately.

The Ministry continues to be interested in further discussions on how the development of a Master Water Management Plan could be utilized, analogous to the development of a Liquid Waste Management Plan, in developing a long term plan with public participation/consultation that could potentially lead to an exemption from obtaining electoral approval for the works identified in the plan. These discussions would also need to include the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Health.

B26 ASSESSMENT OF CONTAMINATED LAND

WHEREAS Section 19(3)(h) of the *Assessment Act* permits the assessor, in determining the value of property, to consider other circumstances affecting the value of the land and improvements, including the physical condition of property and the extent to which it is contaminated;

AND WHEREAS the UBCM membership has consistently endorsed resolutions – most recently 2005-B21 and 2011-B37 – pointing out that causing or allowing contamination can result in the substantial reduction in assessed value of an industrial property, thereby decreasing the property owner's tax burden while creating inequality among industrial taxpayers and reducing the tax revenue available to local governments:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province of British Columbia amend the *Assessment Act* to require the assessor, when determining the value of property for an assessment roll, to disregard evidence of existing contamination caused or contributed to by industrial processes carried out by the owner on the property, or on an adjacent or associated industrial property under the same ownership;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this requirement would apply to a property regardless of whether the property contained a business operation.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development

BC Assessment is required to assess properties at their market value. Valuing contaminated sites at their market value takes into account the current state of the property, as well as the remediation required to achieve the intended use of the site and the time frame for any redevelopment. The assessed value must reflect the likely cost of remediation and the time frame required for that remediation, as the market will take those factors into consideration in determining market value.

In general, the market values of the properties will increase as remediation progresses. Once remediation is complete to the extent required for its intended use, the market value will reflect the value of a fully remediated property for its proposed use.

The assessment for a property is not typically changed to reflect contamination until a site is registered as a contaminated site. However, the market may reflect some stigma effect for properties where contamination may be suspected (e.g., gas stations).

In summary, not taking into consideration remediation costs when valuing properties would be inconsistent with the legislative framework (*Assessment Act*) that requires properties be valued according to their fair market value.

B27 URBAN UNGULATES

WHEREAS local governments are experiencing significant costs, controversy, and difficulty implementing committee recommendations in attempting to manage provincial urban wildlife, especially deer, in their communities:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM ask the Province to resume their responsibility and/or provide adequate funding to effectively manage and mitigate the impacts of urban wildlife and in particular ungulates within the boundaries of municipalities, including the issuance of tickets for violations under any wildlife attractants bylaw.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

The Province believes that there isn't any single solution to all urban deer issues because every community differs in geography, urban wildlife population and handling capacity for extant wildlife.

The Province is committed to partnering with local governments to facilitate the development of socially acceptable urban deer management solutions. Ministry staff assist communities in managing urban wildlife conflicts in a number of ways, including participation on community-based planning committees, provision of technical advice, development of hunting regulations, issuing permits to manage urban wildlife populations and loaning available equipment to communities as required.

Several communities have already made good progress in developing community-owned management plans. The Province will continue to work with local communities across the Province to help them manage urban deer conflicts.

B29 STREAMKEEPERS – WORKS IN STREAMS

WHEREAS Streamkeepers and other such non-profit societies provide a valuable service in protecting and enhancing fish habitat;

AND WHEREAS, under the current federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans and provincial regulations, non-profit societies are not able to receive the appropriate approvals to undertake certain projects that would greatly improve fish habitat:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM urge the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and the Province of British Columbia to permit non-profit societies to do works in streams for the purpose of improving fish habitat.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

The Province appreciates, supports and permits the efforts of non-profit groups in working to restore fish habitat; however, the appropriate approvals must be in place to ensure that conservation objectives are being met. In-stream activities in particular can result in significant damage to fish habitat if not conducted properly.

Under the *Water Act*, Section 9, no one may make "changes in and about a stream" without an approval or notification in accordance with Part 7 of the Water Regulation. This provision applies, with very few exceptions, to all activities in and about a stream, even those activities carried out by provincial and federal staff.

Projects in and around fish habitat are also subject to review and approval under the federal *Fisheries Act*.

The Province has reviewed proposals in the past that, if implemented, would have caused more harm than benefit to fish habitat. For that reason, the Ministry recommends that groups work with qualified environmental professionals to design and oversee projects that aim to improve fish habitat and that the necessary approvals are in place.

B30 DERELICT & ABANDONED VESSELS

WHEREAS the UBCM previously endorsed resolutions in 2005, 2010, and 2012 proposing constructive solutions and encouraging the federal and provincial governments to take action on the issue of derelict and abandoned vessels;

AND WHEREAS the issue continues to be of significant concern to coastal communities for economic, aesthetic, environmental and safety reasons:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM again request the provincial and federal governments to increase their efforts to work together to create a permanent solution to the issue of abandoned and derelict vessels that includes sustainable funding sources.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

Dealing with unauthorized float homes, abandoned vessels and derelict structures near public waterways is a complex, time-consuming and costly job that can, depending on circumstances, involve multiple agencies and levels of government.

Federal authorities are the lead agency regarding structures or vessels that obstruct maritime navigation or pose a threat to spawning beds or the environment. When a vessel runs aground or sinks on provincial Crown land, federal authorities remain the lead agency. If the structure in question is not recognized as a vessel, then the Province has jurisdiction to act.

Often, provincial and federal agencies work together to deal with abandoned vessels on a priority basis, with highest priority reserved for those that pose an immediate threat to navigation safety or the environment.

B31 SCOTCH BROOM

WHEREAS the Province of British Columbia has enacted the BC *Weed Control Act* to protect farmland and farmers' livelihood against the spread of noxious weeds that are extremely competitive with crops and are difficult and costly to control;

AND WHEREAS Scotch Broom is invasive, spreads rapidly, can render farm land unusable for growing food crops, destroys pasture lands, is toxic to grazing animals, inhibits re-growth of forests, eliminates native vegetation, contains toxic chemicals or substances that can affect the nervous system and the heart and is highly flammable;

AND WHEREAS the Ministry of Forests & Range states that it is "important that broom is recognized as a threat to our biodiversity and preventative means be taken to arrest its spread":

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the Ministry of Agriculture to designate Scotch Broom as a noxious weed under the BC *Weed Control Act*.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

Government recognizes the impacts and threats posed by noxious weeds and other invasive plants. British Columbia's agriculture sector, fish and wildlife habitat, infrastructure, recreational opportunities, and human health are potentially at risk.

Administration of the *Weed Control Act* was transferred to the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations in 2010. Ministry staff, along with the Inter-Ministry Invasive Species Working Group, are reviewing the *Weed Control Act* Regulation and completing risk analyses on invasive plant species to identify high-risk candidates for designation as noxious weeds. Through this process, Scotch broom has been confirmed as a species to be added to the noxious weed list.

It is our intention to put forward the proposed *Weed Control Act* Regulation changes in 2014.

B32 ENFORCEMENT OF SOURCE WATER PROTECTION

WHEREAS protecting and enforcing source water protection is an essential provincial government service to support ecosystem functioning, healthy drinking water and economic prosperity;

AND WHEREAS there are no longer professional provincial staff dedicated to source protection:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the BC government allocate appropriate resources for the protection of community watersheds – recognizing the importance of source water protection to regional economies and quality of life.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

The Ministry agrees that source water protection is important for ecosystem needs, drinking water protection and economic security. Source water protection is a shared responsibility and can only be achieved through cooperation between all levels of government, industry and the public.

While the desire for increasing dedicated resources for source water protection is understandable, during periods of fiscal constraint, limited funding is available for new initiatives. However, the Ministry has been undergoing business delivery and organizational changes that may improve efficiency and effectiveness with the resources that it has available and may improve the ability of the Province to support source water protection:

- Integrated Decision Making – Structural and legislative changes are underway to make resource management decision-making processes more integrated, enabling decision makers to better consider a full range of resource values, including water.
- Area-based Management – The trend towards regional and district level resource management enables staff at the local level to be more aware of potential impacts on resource values, such as water, and to take action to address those impacts if necessary.
- Interagency Cooperation – Regional interagency management committees meet regularly to share information and collaborate on actions. A frequent topic of discussion with these committees is drinking water protection.
- Compliance and Enforcement – Dedicated Natural Resource Officers are able to focus on compliance and enforcement issues in the natural resource sector and can address compliance issues that may impact water.

Furthermore, it is expected that the proposed *Water Sustainability Act,* if enacted, will further support source water protection by enabling the setting of water objectives and watershed sustainability planning. Resourcing requirements for these new initiatives are being considered as part of the legislation development.

B33 BROWNFIELDS

WHEREAS vacant sites or orphan properties known as "brownfields" are often on properties located along transportation corridors and in downtown core areas, are eyesores to the community and have caused real or suspected environmental contamination and negatively impact economic development of that specific site and in the general area of that specific site;

AND WHEREAS the owners of these "brownfield" sites have already reaped the benefits and should have an obligation to clean-up their own mess;

AND WHEREAS the UBCM membership endorsed resolution 2008-B33, which strongly urged the provincial government to take immediate steps to implement the previously adopted resolutions 2007-B29 and 2007-B70 that were passed at the 2007 Convention and no concrete action has taken place;

AND WHEREAS there has been no real progress to support rural communities continuing to face the challenge of economic loss and unsightly premises in their downtown core due to real or suspected environmental contamination on vacant lots;

AND WHEREAS provincial policies and regulations for remediation of brownfield sites are vague and not strictly enforced:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request that the Ministry of Environment be authorized to legislate that owners of all contaminated brownfield sites, regardless of their hazard rating, be remediated upon request from the local government and provide timely communication with the local government regarding remediation progress.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment

In response to issues related to the delay of remediation activities on contaminated sites (which include brownfield sites), the Province has implemented policy imposing a time limit of one year for completion of site investigation of decommissioned sites. This helps to expedite the remediation process and determine the degree of risk of contamination at these sites sooner. High-risk sites are then identified and dealt with appropriately. Policy also includes the release of local government demolition permits so that structures that frequently become unsightly if left in place may be removed in a timely manner.

The Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations works with partner agencies and stakeholders to increase awareness of brownfield development potential and practices. Key initiatives include:

- Implementation of a fund with a total of $10 million that will match provincial and private sector investment in the early stage investigations on sites where market forces will not achieve redevelopment and where triple-bottom-line outcomes can be achieved.

- Assisting local governments to decrease the impact brownfields may have on the visual aesthetic of a community by providing input into a model bylaw that could address safety and landscaping requirements for brownfield sites prior to redevelopment.

B34 PROVINCIAL COMMUNICATION WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENT REGARDING LICENSES & PERMITS

WHEREAS the Provincial Ministry of Agriculture recently issued harvesting licences that allow for the removal of thousands of tonnes of beach-cast seaweed from the Vancouver Island shoreline;

AND WHEREAS local governments were not aware of the issuance of these licences and are not made aware of other licences issued by the Province that may impact local government:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government be required to inform local governments and allow them the opportunity to comment and ensure local government zoning is in place prior to issuing licences for activity to take place on lands within or adjacent to any local government.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Agriculture

Aquatic plant harvesting is seasonal and transient in nature, does not involve long-term occupancy of the land, nor any structures or works to be placed on the land, and as such, is outside of the jurisdiction of local government zoning. While, the legislation that governs the harvest (Fisheries Act and Fisheries Act Regulations) imposes no legal requirement to refer applications to local governments or to the public, Ministry staff would be pleased to work with local governments to explain the nature of the harvest and to assist with any public inquiries they receive.

B35 AGRICULTURAL LAND COMMISSION LAND DETERMINATION

WHEREAS the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) is governed by the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* and is responsible to preserve agricultural land and to encourage local governments, First Nations, the government and its agents to enable and accommodate farm use of agricultural land and uses compatible with agriculture in their plans, bylaws and policies; an objective would appear to be to maintain a permanent farm land reserve and some of the land has been arbitrarily earmarked as ALR (Agricultural Land Reserve);

AND WHEREAS some of this land deemed not to be suitable to be designated as agricultural land or is of marginal production capability;

AND WHEREAS the determination of ALR within the confines of some local governments results in even more marginalization of capability and also results in extreme costs for local government to develop non-contiguous services for local government infrastructure:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM encourage the provincial government to review the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* and the Agricultural Land Reserve Regulations with a view to establish a process to recognize that these costs to local governments outweigh the potential benefit to British Columbia of retaining land deemed not to be suitable as reserve and the Agricultural Land Commission be requested to change the regulations pertaining to such lands.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Agriculture

Encouraging the stability of farm families and the farming industry in British Columbia, protecting valuable farmland and allowing for responsible economic development opportunities are key priorities for government.

The Provincial government is considering a review of the ALC and the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) as part of Core Review 2013. The Core Review 2013 process was initiated on July 31, 2013 and is to be completed by December 31, 2014.

The ALC has a history of engaging local governments in discussing land use needs in the context of community land use planning exercise. In keeping with its 2012 strategic direction and recent 2013 budget support of government, the ALC is placing more emphasis on engaging with local governments in planning exercises and where appropriate, refining ALR boundaries based on agricultural capability and suitability.

The ALC is already engaged in targeted boundary reviews beginning in the Regional District of East Kootenay. Reviews in the North, Interior and Kootenay Regions are expected to be completed by 2016. This work is made possible by an increase in *Balanced Budget 2013* for Commission operations of $0.931 million in 2013/14, $1.542 million in 2014/15 and $1.417 million in 2015/16.

B36 PROVINCIALLY FUNDED SUPPORT PROGRAMS

WHEREAS the provincial government provides funding to various support programs, including addiction rehabilitation programs;

AND WHEREAS municipal zoning bylaws and other local government legislation may preclude the use of land or buildings for those programs:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government be requested to consult with municipalities to ensure that new or relocating support facilities which are receiving provincial funding are in compliance with local zoning and other municipal bylaws.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

Operators of addiction rehabilitation centres are responsible for ensuring they are in compliance with all local bylaws and have acquired the appropriate building permits from the respective municipality.

The Ministry of Health, through the Health Authorities, may provide support/treatment within the facility after the program is developed.

To be registered as an assisted living residence under the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act*, an operator must comply with all applicable legislation, regulation bylaws and codes. This includes applicable bylaws in the respective municipality. Standard 2 states: *Operators provide a safe, secure and sanitary environment for residents and staff.* Further, Standard 2.1 states *Building design, construction and occupancy comply with requirements of applicable legislation, regulation bylaws and codes:*

- Business license or written confirmation from the local government that license is not required (required);
- Occupancy permit for new buildings and permits for any significant renovations (required); or
- BC Housing Home Inspection or equivalent (required);
- Local fire department approval of fire safety plan (required);
- Permits from local health authority Environmental Health Services for water or sewage disposal systems not on city/municipal/regional district services, hot tubs, and swimming pools (required).

B37 CONTAMINATED SOIL FACILITY - THREAT TO DRINKING WATER WATERSHED

WHEREAS the Province of British Columbia appears on the verge of approving a contaminated soils facility that would permit the dumping of five million tons of highly contaminated material near the headwaters of the Shawnigan Lake drinking water watershed;

AND WHEREAS the citizens and Board of the Cowichan Valley Regional District have expressed their strong opposition to the proposed facility and the dumping of contaminated material in drinking water watersheds;

AND WHEREAS there are significant conflicting hydrogeological and technical opinions about the risk the facility would pose to the environment and people's drinking water:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities support the residents of Shawnigan Lake, the Cowichan communities and the Cowichan Valley Regional District in calling on the Province of British Columbia to invoke the precautionary principle and deny the Waste Discharge Permit Application for property at 460 Stebbings Road in Shawnigan Lake;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Province of British Columbia be requested to amend contaminated site regulations to provide for thorough and appropriate consideration of local government input and land use regulations in the contaminated soils permitting process.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment

The West Coast Regional office of the Ministry of Environment has concluded its review of the application by South Island Aggregates/Cobble Hill Holdings to treat and landfill contaminated soil at a site at 460 Stebbings Road.

The Ministry has considered the input of several agencies and groups, including the Vancouver Island Health Authority, the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations, the Ministry of Energy and Mines, local First Nations, local government and the public through an extensive consultation process. The Ministry also considered and addressed the concerns received from approximately 300 submissions received in response to a draft version of the permit made available for public review in March 2013. Comprehensive reviews of the site geology have been completed by qualified professionals both inside and outside the Ministry of Environment in relation to concerns raised by other agencies, local government and the public.

It has been concluded that the control works, treatment, monitoring, conditions and reporting requirement included in the final version of the permit developed subsequent to the consideration of the opinions of qualified professionals and the numerous concerns raised by the public and other groups will provide the necessary level of treatment for the protection of human and environmental health. As a result a permit has been issued to authorize the treatment and land filling of contaminated soil at the site on Stebbings Road.

The Ministry welcomes meetings with local governments to discuss suggestions for amendments to the legal regime for managing excess and contaminated soils.

B38 FARM GATE SALES

WHEREAS the Province of British Columbia in September 2004 made farm gate sales of meat illegal, which ultimately led to a loss of East Kootenay area producers, such that in 2001 there were 151 cattle ranching and farming operations, 25 hog and pig farms, nine poultry and egg producers, and 56 sheep and goat farms, whereas by 2011 there were 78 cattle ranching and farming operations, one hog and pig farm, one poultry and egg producer, and five sheep and goat farms;

AND WHEREAS this region sees an annual economic impact from the Cranbrook Farmer's Market of over $1 million in response to concerns over food security, a desire to buy locally from known producers, and to support our local economy:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the Province of British Columbia to reinstate farm gate sales in the province in order that we might better support our agricultural community and the growth of that industry, and at the same time respond to consumers' desire for locally grown foods.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Agriculture

There has been a decline in all farm types across Canada, including in BC between 2001 and 2011 (Statistics Canada Census of Agriculture, 2011). Across all commodities, there is a decline in small scale agriculture due to farm consolidation, shifting consumer preferences (away from red meat), technological innovation and economic drivers, such as economies of scale. The reducing inventory of beef and poultry in BC is reflective of the national inventory decline.

In 2010, government made a decision to put support on farm slaughter licenses in the form of Class D and E licenses with both licenses allowing farm gate sales. Both Class D and Class E licenses are available in 10 rural and remote designated regional districts in the northern and coastal areas of the Province. These rural and remote regions address the small population base and lack of animal numbers to create a viable business case for a licensed abattoir. Class E licenses were available in January 2011 in non designated regions of the Province, including the Kootenay and Boundary local governments. Submission of a feasibility study to address a proven lack of slaughter capacity in the geographic area is required.

For Class D licenses, a licence holder can slaughter up to 25 animal units annually (1 animal unit is 1000 kg live animal weight), including their own and other producers. They are allowed minimal processing (quartering of carcass for red meat and removal of wing, head, and leg on poultry). They must label packaged meat as uninspected meat with the regional district they are licenses in and are allowed retail and direct consumer sales at farm gate and farmer's markets only in the regional district the licence is issued in.

For Class E licenses, a licence holder can slaughter up to 10 animal units annually of their own animals only. They are allowed minimal processing (quartering of carcass for red meat and removal of wing, head, and leg on poultry). They are allowed direct consumer sales at farm gate and farmer's markets only in the regional district the licence is issued in and must label packaged meat as uninspected meat with the regional district they are licenced in.

Currently, there are 102 Class D and E licenses, 56 Class D and 6 Class E licences in designated regions and 40 Class E licenses in non-designated regions.

Over 50 percent of the Class E licenses in non designated regions have been issued in the Kootenay and Boundary area of the Province - two in the Kootenay Boundary Regional District, 11 in Central Kootenay Regional District and 9 in East Kootenay Regional District.

Class E licenses are currently available in the Kootenay and Boundary area with the submission of a feasibility study.

B39 SUPPORT FOR RURAL BC PROJECT

WHEREAS rural areas of BC have been struck with numerous economic hardships in past years including the Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy crisis, increased fuel prices, the mountain pine beetle epidemic, and centralization of government spending to urban centres;

AND WHEREAS the Province has provided funding to various beetle action coalitions to recommend ways to improve the economic and social conditions of rural British Columbia, and the three beetle action coalitions have worked together on the Rural BC Project and after considerable research have released a position paper titled, "The Pathway to Prosperity in British Columbia Runs Through its Rural Places: A Long-term Strategy for Rural Development," that will assist in the development of a strategy to assist rural BC communities:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government support the Rural BC Project by working with rural BC to create:

- a BC rural development strategy;
- new rural economic development programming;
- a rural dividend;
- rural advocacy (Minister of Rural BC, and a catalyst organization); and
- a rural BC venture capital program

to reverse rural economic decline and re-establish rural BC as a place which provides healthy sustainable economies, good jobs and strong communities that contribute to making BC a stronger, more resilient province.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training and Minister Responsible for Labour

The importance of rural BC is well recognized by the Province and the Premier. Rural BC is well represented in government decision-making by the significant number of Cabinet Ministers who represent rural areas of the Province. Government has also appointed Donna Barnett as Parliamentary Secretary responsible for rural BC.

The provincial government has already taken substantive action on many of the issues identified by the Rural BC Project. For example, in terms of rural economic development funding, the provincial government has provided $285 million to capitalize the Northern Development, Southern Interior and Island Coastal Development Initiative Trusts. Since 2001, the provincial government has provided over $770 million in various forms of revenue sharing with rural local governments and over $340 million in revenue-sharing with First Nations. The Minister of Community, Sport and Cultural Development is accountable forcreating a framework for a rural dividend for communities in the northwest that will be impacted by the opportunities that will arise from the LNG opportunity.

Government is continuing to work with representatives of the three regional Beetle Action Coalitions (BACs) on the Rural BC Project findings and recommendations. The Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training is working with representatives from the BACs and government ministries to identify and discuss current government rural development initiatives and investments.

While some rural communities have faced economic challenges over the past decade, others have prospered. Most of the proposed major economic projects in the Province over the next decade will be situated in rural BC. Government will continue to work with rural communities and First Nations leaders to build vibrant and sustainable rural regions and communities.

B40 CANADA-EUROPEAN UNION COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC AND TRADE AGREEMENT

WHEREAS Canadian municipalities have expressed growing concerns with trade agreements and their potential impacts on municipal procurement policies which favour local suppliers:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government negotiate a clear, permanent exemption for local governments from CETA.

RESPONSE: Ministry of International Trade and Minister Responsible for the Asia Pacific Strategy and Multiculturalism

The Province has conducted ongoing consultations with the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) as the Canada–European Union negotiations proceeded. Through these consultations, the Province has been made aware of UBCM's concerns regarding the potential application of the proposed agreement to local governments, especially in the areas of procurement. Those concerns have been conveyed to the federal government.

The Government of Canada has stated that a Canada-European Union trade agreement would not prevent governments from addressing the needs of their constituents and providing support to local businesses through grants, loans and fiscal incentives and selection criteria such as quality, price (including transportation costs and duties), technical requirements or relevant experience in competitive bids.

The Government of British Columbia has entered into a non-disclosure document with the federal government and cannot release nor discuss specific negotiating positions, as this may jeopardize the outcome of the negotiations. The Province has consulted, and will continue to consult, with UBCM and explain the impacts of trade agreement obligations on municipalities.

B41 TECHNOLOGY & ENGINEERING EDUCATION

WHEREAS there is an urgent need for technologists and engineers in BC;

AND WHEREAS the BC economy can be strong only if a truly knowledge based resource industry can be built and maintained while adding value to the resources we extract;

AND WHEREAS sufficient technical skills are required to build, innovate and create jobs in the bio-energy, transportation, mining, petrochemical, liquefied natural gas, pulp and paper, and construction sectors;

AND WHEREAS access to local training opportunities creates certainty for recruitment and retention:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government develop a strategy for technical and engineering education, allowing for a seamless transfer from colleges to universities;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the provincial government provide funding for technology and engineering programs where such programs are not currently available.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Advanced Education

Recognizing that British Columbia is projected to see significant economic growth and job creation, government is committed to ensuring that the Province's post-secondary education system provides students with the skills and knowledge needed to fill jobs and that training programs are aligned with labour market demand.

In July 2013, the Ministry of Advanced Education announced support for two new graduate engineering programs that will be offered by the University of Northern British Columbia and delivered at the Wood Innovation and Design Centre in Prince George. The Ministry is providing up to $466,000 to fund start-up costs for the programs that will commence in September 2015.

Under the BC Jobs Plan, government has supported regional workforce tables as a forum for educators, employers, industry representatives and other regional stakeholders to plan how to align training programs with regional needs.

In September 2010, government proclaimed the 2010/11 school year as the Year of Science. This was a $10 million initiative to inspire young people to consider future careers in science, technology, engineering and math-related occupations.

Today, technical and engineering training programs are offered at post-secondary programs across the Province and, because British Columbia has one of North

America's most robust post-secondary transfer systems, students are able to transition between institutions and receive credit for previously-completed programs and courses.

B43 ACCESS TO MEDICAL SERVICES

WHEREAS the communities of Kaslo and Electoral Area D, Regional District Central Kootenay, received notice on September 13, 2012, that the Interior Health Authority will unilaterally terminate 80% of the current on site emergency medical services to the entire North Kootenay Lake, Lardeau and Duncan Valley communities as of November 2, 2012, without any previous consultation with local government and these communities;

AND WHEREAS at least 20% of the population in the local health area live more than one hour away from the Kaslo health facility site and more than two hours away from the next closest emergency site at Nelson:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM support a moratorium on unilateral changes being made by a regional health authority to any health centre or hospital, so that negotiations can find a way to preserve these communities' access to 24/7 emergency services;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the provincial Minister of Health initiate an audit of all health authorities to ensure delivery of medical services to remote and rural British Columbians complies with requirements of the *Canada Health Act*, all appropriate BC legislation and all contractual agreements between the BC government and the health authorities.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

The Ministry of Health supports in principle the resolution that health authorities consult with communities on proposed changes in emergency services, but health authorities must retain the ability to make decisions about service levels.

Interior Health (IH) has consulted extensively with the community of Kaslo and commissioned a report by Dr. John Ross, a Canadian expert on rural emergency care. The report contains 16 recommendations to improve emergency care in Kaslo, and these recommendations are under review by IH.

In the immediate term, IH will focus on strengthening primary care services in Kaslo, which is expected to aid recruitment of physicians and reduce demand for emergency services.

In the longer term, IH and the Ministry will collaborate on identifying opportunities to implement new models of care that may support 24/7 emergency services in Kaslo and other rural communities.

The Ministry will collaborate with all health authorities to identify opportunities to improve delivery of medical services in remote and rural communities.

B44 AIR AMBULANCE SERVICES

WHEREAS the current model for delivery of air ambulance services for people in the far north of BC is inadequate for providing timely access to specialized emergency medical services as required;

AND WHEREAS reliable air ambulance transportation in rural and remote communities in the far north of BC is key to the life-sustaining treatment and recovery of British Columbians:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the provincial government to further support the development of a reliable air ambulance service that fully meets the emergency health care needs of all British Columbians.

B45 HEALTH SERVICE CONSULTATION

WHEREAS health service is a vital part of remote rural communities and local health providers know the health needs and service requirements of their community better than outside sources;

AND WHEREAS all residents throughout BC deserve essential health service;

AND WHEREAS reductions in the current health services in their own community results in added costs and stress to residents, especially the elderly and low income residents, particularly in winter conditions when they must travel to seek health services that are often located a considerable distance away:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request that the provincial government ensure that any proposed change in the level of health services available to any community must first be the subject of consultation between the health authority and local health providers, residents of the affected community and the relevant local governments.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

All health authorities are expected to consult with local communities when planning new services and/or changes to services.

In addition, health authorities are working to improve community engagement in the design and planning of health services. Patients as Partners is a provincial initiative that is supporting this work.

Government recognizes the importance of access to health services for all British Columbians, and understands that residents of rural and remote communities have concerns about access. For this reason, the Ministry of Health (the Ministry) funds a wide range of programs to encourage health professionals to locate in rural communities.

One part of this is to use our physician education programs to expose student doctors to rural practice. In 2004 government established the Northern medical program to educate more doctors in Northern BC. The Ministry has recently expanded this to the Interior through the Southern Medical Program. Since the school was established, we have seen a significant increase in the number of doctors practicing in rural BC.

The Ministry has another important initiative to support services in rural and remote communities. Ten million dollars has been committed to enhance emergency physician services in rural and remote communities in BC. This funding is part of one of the most comprehensive funding and incentive programs in Canada to encourage doctors to set up practice and stay in rural BC.

B46 HEALTH CARE FOR BRITISH COLUMBIANS

WHEREAS the current models of healthcare delivery in the province of BC do not provide equitable local access to health care for residents in rural and small communities;

AND WHEREAS the health needs of small and rural communities are no less important than those of the larger population centres:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED the provincial government through the Ministry of Health work in concert with the local health authorities to develop and fund sustainable health care models tailored to ensure the delivery of adequate health care to all of the residents of the province.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

The Province is committed to ensuring residents of rural British Columbia have access to all levels of health care, no matter where they live.

The Province recognizes the challenges faced by families in rural communities around accessing services and care, including emergency care, obtaining a family physician, and other health services.

The Ministry of Health funds a comprehensive combination of incentives to encourage health care professionals to both live and work in rural areas, and to help sustain services in rural and remote communities.

The Province has also followed up on a commitment made in the summer of 2011 to provide $10 million in funding to benefit rural communities and ensure reliable public access to emergency services. The Province, along with the BC Medical Association worked in partnership on this program. As a result, to date, families in 36 rural communities across British Columbia have benefited from strengthened public access to emergency services.

As well, health authorities are developing telehealth and other technology-based service delivery models that will provide services locally, by linking with health care providers in other communities. Where travel for families is unavoidable, government has developed programs and services to assist families, such as: Travel Assistance Program, Health Connections and the British Columbia Family Residence program.

B47 RURAL DOCTOR SHORTAGE

WHEREAS healthy communities are increasingly becoming a priority of local governments within British Columbia through the Province of BC's Healthy Families BC initiative;

AND WHEREAS attracting and retaining doctors in the rural areas of British Columbia is becoming increasingly difficult:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the provincial government to ensure appropriate funding is in place to attract and retain doctors located within the rural areas of the province to ensure that the Province of BC's Healthy Families BC initiative results in positive outcomes for all local governments.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

The BC government expanded and distributed the University of BC (UBC) undergraduate and postgraduate medical programs to educate more doctors across the Province to better meet the health care needs of British Columbians. The goal of distributing medical education is to prepare future doctors for the challenges and benefits of medical practice in a variety of communities, including rural, remote, northern and underserved communities and to encourage the MD trainees to consider practicing in these communities upon completion of training.

The Ministry of Health also has a return of service program whereby International Medical Graduate (IMG) physicians that match to specific positions in UBC Residency Programs are expected to fulfil a two (family practitioners) to three-year (specialists) Return of Service (ROS) in health authority-identified rural and semi-rural communities of need. The family practice IMGs with a ROS are distributed across the Province to ensure that each health authority receives some of these physicians. To date, Powell River has received three physicians through the ROS Program, two general practitioners and one specialist. Vancouver Coastal Health Authority has identified Powell River as a community in need for 2014.

To align with the Medical Council of Canada (MCC), IMG applicants can write the MCC Equivalency Exam in the final 20 months of their undergraduate medical education training; this allows IMGs to write the National Assessment Collaboration Objective Standardized Clinical Examination (NAC OSCE) in their final year of medical training. British Columbia is now offering the NAC OSCE twice yearly to 70 IMG, in the spring and 70 IMGs in the fall for a total of 140 IMG seats. The NAC OSCE can be written anywhere in Canada in their final year of undergraduate medical education.

The BC Government is also developing a Provincial Health Human Resource Strategy to allow the Ministry of Health and key stakeholders including health authorities to better plan and manage the physician workforce within the context of an integrated, team-based and multi-professional approach to meeting patient and population health needs.

The Provincial Health Human Resource Strategy will enable the Province to take a proactive approach towards education and training, recruitment and retention and the delivery of medical services.

The Joint Standing Committee on Rural Issues (JSC), with representatives from the British Columbia Medical Association, government and health authorities, have several programs in place to recruit and retain physicians to rural BC. These include the Recruitment Incentive Fund which offers up to $15,000 for physicians recruited to Powell River; the Recruitment Contingency Fund, which provides assistance to health authorities for recruitment expenses (i.e., advertising, relocation, physician visits, etc.); the Rural Retention Program, which provides a fee premium for physicians providing service in Powell River of 10.5 percent and an annual flat fee of $9,180. The JSC continues to work on enhancing and expanding programs to support the delivery of physician services to rural BC.

In May of 2012, the Ministry of Health announced funding of $22.2 million for the creation of 190 Nurse Practitioner (NP) positions that are currently being implemented with an expected full implementation target date of April 1, 2014. NPs work independently and as part of interdisciplinary health care teams in acute, primary care and residential care settings across BC.

NPs have already been deployed to address specific health needs as identified by local Divisions of Family Practice, coordinating their practice with General Practitioners to better address the needs of complex and vulnerable patient populations. In addition, NPs are providing an increased level of care to First Nation communities and marginalized patient populations across BC.

B48 FUNDING FOR COMMUNITY HOSPICE & RESPITE BEDS

WHEREAS the lack of funding for hospice and respite beds is having a negative effect on the cost of health care in BC and failing to meet the needs of communities;

AND WHEREAS the inability to give respite to "in home" care givers is causing compromises to their health:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the provincial government to provide appropriate funding for the operating costs of hospice and respite facilities in our communities.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

Palliative care is an evolving area and as BC's population ages and those with life-limiting illnesses live longer, government recognizes this area as a high priority.

In March 2013 the Provincial End-of-Life Care Action Plan was released. The Action Plan outlines key priorities and actions to improve the way health care providers meet the needs of individuals and their families coping with end-of-life.

The goals of the plan speak to the redesign of health services to deliver timely coordinated end-of-life care; the provision of palliative care information, education, tools and resources; and the strengthening of health system accountability and efficiency.

Accompanying the release of the Action Plan was: the announcement of a $2 million commitment to establish a BC Centre for Palliative Care. The Centre's purpose is to advocate for and accelerate innovation and best practices in palliative care to benefit all British Columbians and operate as a virtual hub to promote education, evidence-informed practice and policy development; accelerate innovation and best practice; and improve care for people with serious illness and their families. The provision of approximately $15 million in one-time funding to support hospices in recent years was also a part of the Action Plan.

In the summer of 2013, Government made a commitment to double the number of hospice spaces in the Province by 2020. The Ministry of Health is initiating a targeted project that includes a working committee with stakeholder representation, including Hospice Societies, to develop an implementation strategy.

Recognition and support for those providing care for loved ones at home continues to be important to government. Respite services can give caregivers temporary relief from the emotional and physical demands of caring for a friend or family member and provide an opportunity to participate in community activities.

The collection of services provided by the health authorities is designed to reflect the needs of the community, and great effort is made to ensure that individuals and their caregivers are supported at home.

B50 JOINT TASK FORCE ON SCHOOL FUNDING FORMULA

WHEREAS the current funding formula for rural education, in effect for the last decade, has resulted insubstantial funding cuts and has created significant differences between various school districts by the application of inequitable criteria that has negatively impacted the quality of education in numerous rural school districts;

AND WHEREAS there has not been an adequate review of the effectiveness or fairness of the funding formula for BC school districts:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM strongly support the formation of a joint task force consisting of representatives from the Ministry of Education and BCSTA to undertake a comprehensive performance audit, review and possible revision of the funding formula for education in rural areas so as to ensure the fair funding, equal access and high quality of public education throughout the province.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Education

Government recognizes that northern and rural communities have unique needs and this is reflected in the K-12 funding formula for BC school districts through supplemental funding. An additional funding supplement is also provided to school districts experiencing the greatest student enrolment decline. The Ministry is providing nearly $1 billion more each year to school districts than in 2000/01. In the same period, September student enrolment has declined by approximately 72,000 students.

B51 SCHOOL CREATIVE SOLUTIONS

WHEREAS the Government of British Columbia recognizes that rural and small communities have unique needs, and that a stable and effective public education system is instrumental in creating and supporting both a sustainable community and province, and that many school districts have announced significant financial challenges for 2013 and beyond;

AND WHEREAS the closure of schools can have significant, and often permanent long term results such as preventing economic resurgence and inhibiting population growth in a community, and can be detrimental to the development of students, resulting in significant social and economic loss in our province:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM strongly request the Government of British Columbia to continue its commitment to build strong communities throughout the province by adequately funding education and schools to promote the stability and sustainability of communities through the province; and where additional funding is unavailable, that the Ministry of Education be encouraged to assist local interest groups to develop creative solutions to keep schools open and to provide top quality education to students, where they live, throughout British Columbia.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Education

Despite pressures and challenges, the provincial government has kept its commitment to protect K-12 education funding, which remains at a record $4.725 billion in operating grants to public school districts for 2013/14. The Ministry supports boards of education to provide creative and flexible learning environments for students to achieve their best. BC's Education Plan is designed to support and enable more flexibility for personalized learning. The Ministry encourages boards to work with communities to develop programs at the local level to best support students and to maximize the use of their school facilities.

It should be noted that BC's boards of education are separate legal entities under the *School Act*. Each board makes its own budgetary decisions and has the authority to close schools. However, prior to a board making the decision to close a school facility, it must first engage in a process of public consultation.

B52 PROVINCIAL FUNDING OF SOCIAL SERVICE & HOUSING PROGRAMS

WHEREAS the behaviours of people living with mental health, addictions and other chronic and social health issues without access to appropriate housing and related supports has a negative impact on the safety and economic development of our communities;

AND WHEREAS low cost housing with appropriate outreach, social and health supports is a cost effective means of stabilizing and improving the lives of those living with these chronic issues:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Ministries of Social Development, Housing and Health work together to provide sufficient funding to local service providers and housing programs to address the needs of individuals living in our communities with mental health, addictions and other chronic social and health issues.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Natural Gas Development and Minister Responsible for Housing

Government is committed to providing the best support for people facing challenges associated with mental illness, substance use and homelessness. The Province welcomes project proposals from any local government and works closely with municipalities and non-profit organizations to help increase the availability of affordable housing.

Since 2007, the Province has committed $520 million to create more than 2,100 supportive housing units in eight communities for those who are homeless or at risk. More than twenty of these developments are open; the rest will open over the next two to three years. Each of these facilities is a partnership between the Province, local governments and community agencies.

Supportive housing takes a 'housing first' approach. First, get people into a safe environment where they can stabilize. Then connect them to services they need to begin rebuilding their lives. This includes addictions support and mental health services.

The Province knows that supportive housing is less expensive and has better outcomes for the individual compared to a shelter bed and know that supportive housing works. In total, there are more than 7,500 units available for the homeless, with another 990 under development.

The Province has also invested in facilities where individuals can access more intensive supports. In January 2013, the Chilliwack Health and Housing Contact Centre officially opened. There are 22 supportive apartments and a Health Centre providing a range of services.

In November 2012, Quibble Creek opened in Surrey. It has 15 short-term recovery beds and 52 post-treatment apartments, a Sobering Centre to help individuals recover from acute intoxication and a Primary Health Care Service for people struggling with complex substance use issues. In December 2010, $3 million was invested to purchase the Baldy Hughes Addiction Centre in Prince George to make sure it remained open.

The Ministry of Health provided a one-time grant of $500,000 in July 2010 to further support services at the Centre. In 2008, the Burnaby Centre for Mental Health and Addictions opened, a 100-bed treatment facility supporting medically stable adults, with a range of mental health and substance use problems and the first of its kind in British Columbia.

The Province is committed to protecting those recovering from addiction challenges, through the use of Supportive Recovery Houses.

B53 REQUEST TO AMEND THE SAFER PROGRAM

WHEREAS the Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters (SAFER) program of BC Housing is intended to help in making rents affordable for BC seniors with low to moderate incomes by providing monthly cash assistance to subsidize rents for eligible BC residents;

AND WHEREAS the upper limits of the maximum monthly rent levels for the SAFER program in Metro Vancouver have not been changed since October, 2005;

AND WHEREAS the upper limits of the maximum monthly rent levels for the SAFER program no longer reflect the average rental costs for housing in Metro Vancouver which erodes the intended assistance for seniors on fixed incomes;

AND WHEREAS seniors deserve our respect for their decisions in choosing the appropriate community in which to live in order to optimize their opportunities for health, participation and security to enhance quality of life;

AND WHEREAS seniors regardless of their health or abilities are required to re-apply annually to stay in the SAFER program or risk losing months of rental subsidy before reinstatement:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Government of British Columbia adjust the maximum monthly rent levels under the SAFER program to reflect the actual prevailing cost of housing for seniors across the province and eliminate the requirement of annual re-application.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Natural Gas Development and Minister Responsible for Housing

Increasing affordable housing options is a priority for the B.C. government and an important part of our commitment to seniors. Since 2001, the Province hase committed to build close to 21,000 new units of affordable housing for individuals, families and seniors. More than 19,000 are complete, the rest are in development or under construction.

SAFER is one program in a range of housing options that the government invests in to meet the diverse needs of seniors in our Province. The Province helps more than 50,000 seniors' households across BC keep their housing affordable through SAFER and subsidized independent housing, as well as supportive housing and assisted living for those who need additional supports.

Since the SAFER program expanded in 2005, the Province has invested more than $1.3 billion (provincial and federal dollars) in affordable, subsidized housing programs for seniors, and launched the Home Adaptations for Independence program, which provides up to $20,000 per home to help low-income seniors and people with disabilities finance home modifications for accessible, safe and independent living.

Assisted living and supportive seniors' units have been built to help seniors remain independent and stay in their home communities, close to family and friends (there are now more than 5,100 units province-wide; 1,760 are in Metro Vancouver) and approximately 1,300 units of new affordable rental housing has been built for seniors and people with disabilities (more than 300 of these units are in Metro Vancouver).

An annual reapplication process is necessary as benefits are based on rent paid, the number of people in the household and household income, all of which can change on an annual basis.

B55 INCREASE IN SOCIAL ASSISTANCE RATES

WHEREAS the amount of support given to individuals on disability, welfare, and/or old age security is inadequate to support people's basic human needs in terms of adequate shelter, clothing, food, and other basic necessities, based on today's cost of living;

AND WHEREAS this forces individuals, who are obliged by circumstance to utilize these programs, to live in a manner that violates basic human rights and dignity:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM call on the provincial and federal governments to increase the basic support allowance given to individuals on disability, welfare, and/or old age security to a level that reflects the true cost of living in our country.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation

Income and disability assistance is intended to help eligible British Columbians temporarily while they look for work and to provide supports for those who are not able to work due to a disability. Rates need to be sustainable and at a level that provides an incentive for employable clients to find and keep full-time jobs. When setting assistance rates, the government of BC is obligated to take a balanced approach – a realistic undertaking between what is fair to individuals seeking assistance and what this government's fiscal plan can support.

The current rate structure takes into account all provincial and federal tax credits, child benefits and other available programs and support for low-income families and families on income and disability assistance. In addition, all clients are eligible for health and other supplementary benefits to meet a variety of unexpected or additional needs and Persons with Disabilities clients receive significant additional health benefits, including dental and optical coverage and medical supplies and equipment.

Although the Province is not in a financial position to consider a rate increase at this time, exploring innovative, low-cost ways to improve services to people receiving assistance continues. In October 2012, the Ministry implemented new policies that allowed clients, especially families with children, to increase their monthly income. These changes included implementing earnings exemptions for employable clients, increasing the earnings exemption for Persons with Disabilities and exempting income tax refunds and retroactive Family Bonus payments. Government will continue to work with communities, stakeholders and individuals to explore other initiatives to improve the income and disability assistance system.

B56 ENSURE FOOD SECURITY

WHEREAS income security and food security are inextricably bound, and the number of people who are food insecure in municipalities in BC continues to rise in spite of an ever-growing number of charitable food redistribution efforts;

AND WHEREAS enabling people to feed themselves with dignity requires everyone's participation, and Canada is obligated under international law to provide an adequate standard of living which includes the human right to adequate food and nutrition; with the most comprehensive way to do this being for all levels of government to accept their responsibilities to develop policies and programs that will end hunger in Canada:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM urge the provincial government to ensure food security for all British Columbians and eliminate the need for food banks by implementing measures that provide adequate and accessible income support for the non-employed and improve the earnings of those in the low-wage workforce.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation

Addressing food security is a complex issue that spans several program areas.

Employment at a decent wage is the key to successfully ensuring income and food security. Since May 2011, the minimum wage has increased three times to $10.25 per hour, making it among the highest in Canada. The Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation (Ministry) provides employment services and supports to help unemployed British Columbians find and keep a job through the Employment Program of BC. More than 108,000 people have received Employment Program of BC services since the program was launched April 2, 2012. Of those who have been provided and completed case management services, about 50 percent have found employment.

Income support through the Ministry is intended to help eligible British Columbians temporarily while they look for work, and to provide additional support for those who have a disability. Rates need to be sustainable and at a level that provides an incentive for employable clients to find and keep full-time jobs. The Province must also balance what is fair to individuals seeking assistance and what can be supported by the current fiscal plan.

The current rate structure takes into account all provincial and federal tax credits, child benefits and other available programs and support for low-income families and families on income and disability assistance. In addition, all clients are eligible for health and other supplementary benefits to meet a variety of unexpected or additional needs and Persons with Disabilities clients receive significant additional health benefits, including dental and optical coverage and medical supplies and equipment. These include nutritional supplements to provide for additional dietary costs faced by people with certain medical conditions and pre and post-natal mothers.

Although the Province is not in a financial position to consider an income assistance rate increase at this time, exploring innovative, low-cost ways to improve services to people receiving assistance continues. In October 2012, the Ministry implemented new policies that allowed clients, especially families with children, to increase their monthly income. These changes included implementing earnings exemptions for employable clients, increasing the earnings exemption for Persons with Disabilities and exempting income tax refunds and retroactive Family Bonus payments. The Province will continue to work with communities, stakeholders and individuals to explore other initiatives to improve the income and disability assistance system.

It's also important to recognize the numerous other government supports available for low income and vulnerable individuals and families, such as:

- Subsidized housing and rental assistance for low income families;
- Child care subsidies;
- MSP Premium assistance;
- CommunityLINK funds, which help school districts provide breakfast and lunch programs;
- Financial support for community gardens and farmers' markets; and
- Investing a total of $4-million in a Farmers' Market Nutrition Coupon Program over two years for lower-income pregnant women and families and seniors to buy locally grown fruit, veggies and meat.

In addition, the Ministry of Children and Family Development is working with the Representative for Children and Youth and UBCM's Healthy Communities Committee to develop and implement local poverty reduction strategies that address the real challenges families are facing in metro, urban, rural and remote settings in a number of pilot communities.

B57 INDEPENDENCE OF THE OFFICE OF THE SENIORS ADVOCATE

WHEREAS the creation of the Office of the Seniors Advocate through the introduction of Bill 10 – 2013, *Seniors Advocate Act*, was a correct and commendable course of action by the provincial government in response to supporting seniors;

AND WHEREAS parts of the spectrum of seniors services, including housing, transportation and income support, are not under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Health, which the Act has defined as the ministry to which the Office of the Seniors Advocate will report:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM respectfully request that the provincial government amend the *Seniors Advocate Act* to identify the Office of the Seniors Advocate as an independent office of the Legislature, reporting to the Members of the Legislative Assembly, rather than to the Minister of Health.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

Input received through the Seniors Advocate consultations in May-July 2012 was used to inform the development of the *Seniors Advocate Act* (the Act).

The Act was introduced in February 2013 and received Royal Assent on March 14, 2013. The new legislation outlines the mandate, accountabilities and authority of the Seniors Advocate and paves the way for the creation of the Office of the Seniors Advocate – the first of its kind in Canada.

Once appointed, the Seniors Advocate will be a statutory officer much like the Provincial Health Officer and Auditor General for Local Government who will serve as independent advisor to the minister responsible for seniors – currently, the Minister of Health – and will work to promote positive systemic change that benefits seniors in British Columbia.

The Advocate will have a broad mandate that includes monitoring seniors' services generally; promoting awareness; working collaboratively with seniors, policymakers, service providers and others to identify solutions to systemic issues; and making recommendations to government to improve the welfare of seniors.

As the voice for seniors, the Advocate will also monitor and advise on a range of seniors' services related to health care, personal care, housing, transportation and income support – topics that reflect what was heard during the consultation process last year.

Collaboration and cooperation will be the preferred approach to resolving issues, but where stronger tools are needed to fulfill the mandate, the Advocate will have the power to require information from prescribed providers of seniors' services.

To enhance the autonomy of the office, the Advocate will be able to appoint a council of advisors, identify his/her work priorities and plans, make independent recommendations to government, and hire his/her own employees and outside experts.

This model strikes a balance between the independence needed to objectively review government policies, and the ability to effect meaningful systemic change – two priorities identified by the public and stakeholder groups during the consultation process.

B58 ACCESS TO GOVERNMENT SERVICES

WHEREAS Service Canada is cutting back or eliminating services in small rural communities;

AND WHEREAS rural residents are being left without access to Service Canada:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request both the provincial and federal governments to ensure that minimum levels of access be provided in rural communities.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Technology, Innovation and Citizens' Services

Both small and large communities rely equally on government to deliver services. Government has committed to providing those essential services at previous UBCM conventions and will continue to deliver on those commitments.

Service BC has 61 locations; almost all are located outside Victoria or the Lower Mainland. In most rural areas, there is a Service BC centre within reasonable travel time, where citizens can walk in and get face-to-face help with a full range of government services.

Through the Service BC Contact Centre, citizens have toll-free telephone and email access to information about, and referrals to, government programs and services.

B60 ACCESS TO LEGAL AID SERVICES

WHEREAS:

A. Funding for legal aid was cut back by over 40% in 2002 and the small increases since then have not kept up with inflation and as a result there is a very low level of legal aid coverage (almost none in family cases, none in poverty law cases, and limited criminal defence and refugee case coverage);
B. The funding of legal aid in British Columbia is 10th out of 13 provinces and territories;
C. Self-represented litigants who have legal problems that are not effectively resolved have escalating problems of poverty, homelessness, mental illness, lack of employability and deteriorating health;
D. Such persons live in our community and their unresolved, or badly resolved, legal problems mushroom and become the problems of our community;
E. Self-represented persons cause slow-downs and backlogs in our courts which have negative repercussions for individuals and businesses who use the courts to resolve disputes; and
F. Slow-downs and backlogs in the courts also give rise to public safety concerns because persons accused of crime are not tried in a timely way, sometimes are not tried at all because of the delays, and public safety officials, such as the police, spend undue amounts of time on such cases instead of making our communities safe:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM call on the provincial government to:

- Commit to increased, long term, stable funding for the Legal Services Society;
- Recognize legal aid as an essential service fundamental to a just society; and
- Engage in a constructive dialogue to effect change to improve access to legal services for all British Columbians which will positively affect BC communities.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Justice

The Province is focused on ensuring timely access to justice and legal aid is an essential part of that. This year, the Province is providing a total of $72.5 million to the Legal Services Society and is working with Society staff to plan for an expansion of criminal and family legal aid services in advance of increasing the Society's budget by $2 million in fiscal year 2014/15.

In 2012, as part of our Justice Reform Initiative, the Society provided the Ministry with advice about legal aid reform that could contribute to broader justice system effectiveness. As a result, in the *White Paper on Justice Reform, Part Two*, the Province committed to supporting the Society to test an expanded criminal duty counsel model and increase the family law services it currently provides. The Ministry will continue to engage in a close dialogue with the Society to implement these reforms in the future.

Access to justice, however, must be seen as more than access to court. There are many situations, particularly in the areas of family and civil law, where court is not the best option for people to resolve their problems. That is why the Province also invests $30 million annually on other access to justice services, such as the Family Maintenance Enforcement Program and information, assessment, referral and mediation services at over twenty Family Justice Centres and two Justice Access Centres across the Province. A third Justice Access Centre opened in Victoria in October 2013.

The Province is working to develop a continuum of user-focused services that help prevent justice system disputes, where possible, and to assist individuals to reach early resolutions and go to court only when necessary.

B61 EXPANSION OF BROADBAND SERVICES

WHEREAS the delivery of health and education services in northern remote communities is impaired by the lack of connectivity;

AND WHEREAS specifically, services such as "tele-health" and distance education are vital, cost-efficient services significantly contributing to northern development:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM write the federal Minister of Industry and BC Minister of Citizens' Services and Open Government seeking a renewed and highest priority commitment to the expansion of broadband technology in northern British Columbia.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Citizens' Services and Open Government

This government is committed to bridging the digital divide in BC. Access to high-speed Internet service brings economic and educational opportunities for communities, individuals and families. Through partnerships with industry like the 10-year contract with TELUS and programs like the BC Broadband Satellite Initiative, connecting British Columbians continues. 93 percent of British Columbians have access to broadband service; our goal is to reach 100 percent across the Province by 2021.

UBCM membership has consistently endorsed resolutions calling on the provincial and federal governments to ensure the availability of broadband Internet service for all communities in BC. The government indicated that it was working with the private sector and other orders of government to provide all citizens with access to high speed Internet service within the next 10 years. The government remains committed to reaching this goal.

BC is one of the most connected jurisdictions in the world. Currently 93 percent of British Columbians have access to broadband or high-speed Internet service. The 10-year Connecting British Columbia Agreement signed in July, 2011, with TELUS includes a commitment to expand broadband service coverage in BC that will reach 97 percent. The remaining three percent will be reached through other means, including partnerships with local community Internet service providers, local governments and new programs such as a new broadband satellite initiative to be launched later in 2013.

B62 TRAPPING OF ANIMALS

WHEREAS trapping is legal in rural BC without any signage or notification of the presence of trap lines, meaning that in areas shared by the general public and their pets off leash there have been cases of death or severe harm to pets due to trap lines, and concerns raised for the health and safety of the general public:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM urge the Province of British Columbia to investigate and legislate ways to prevent domestic animals from being further injured in traps such as Conibear;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that trap lines not be allowed in recreational areas close to communities, rural area developments and residential clusters.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

Given that urban interface areas are often the place where wild animals come into conflict with people, it is problematic to eliminate the use of traps in these areas; however, the provincial government remains committed to working with municipalities to reduce the risk to domestic animals. The Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations is actively reviewing trapping regulations to explore options for reducing or preventing inadvertent harm to domestic animals.

British Columbia trappers are trained and certified to trap in a safe and humane manner through the Trappers Education Program, which is required for licensing in BC. The government is investigating the development of educational programs regarding the importance of signage in active trapping areas as part of our response to previous resolutions on trapping.

B63 POLICE OFFICER RECRUITMENT FUND

WHEREAS the federal government has announced that it will not renew its financial commitment to the Police Officer Recruitment Fund program which expires in March 2013;

AND WHEREAS this loss of funding will impact policing costs and programs as the fund aided in adding more police officers across Canada, and the Province utilized funds to create special units to combat major crimes and drugs, thus supporting and enhancing local police forces:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the federal Minister of Public Safety and the provincial Minister of Justice and Attorney General to continue funding the Police Officer Recruitment Fund.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Justice

Although the federal government has not renewed its funding for the Police Officer Recruitment Fund, the Province recognized the benefit of the Guns and Gangs strategy.

As a result, the Province has committed to funding the units created under the original federal Police Officer Recruitment Fund and has extended the financial support.

B64 EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLANS FOR DAMS IN BC

WHEREAS British Columbia has many man-made dams on its rivers and streams throughout the province and this infrastructure creates man-made hazards that the general public needs to be informed of as well as of the potential risks and impacts they create;

AND WHEREAS while the current Dam Safety Regulation (BC Reg. 163/2011) requires dam permit holders to prepare and maintain emergency plans, there are no provisions to require dam permit holders to inform and educate the general public on the hazards, risks and impacts associated with the dams before or during an emergency event:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the Province of British Columbia to enact changes to legislation/regulation that would require dam permit holders to prepare all-encompassing emergency management plans that include requirements for dam permit holders to conduct public education, develop comprehensive public notification procedures and assist in the coordination of emergency response and recovery efforts to ensure the safety of the public.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

The provincial government remains committed to improving dam safety and is actively working with dam owners to ensure compliance with the Dam Safety Regulation. When dam audits and inspections identify deficiencies that compromise public safety, dam owners have the option of mitigating the risk or decommissioning the dam.

Under the Dam Safety Regulation, all owners of significant, high, very high and extreme consequence dams are required to develop emergency preparedness plans defining the hazards posed by the dam, as well as required notifications. Dam owners routinely share their emergency plans with local authorities; however, the vast majority of dams are relatively small structures owned by individuals who lack the resources and expertise to prepare emergency plans for the surrounding region.

Under the *Emergency Program Act*, local governments have the authority to provide emergency training and conduct emergency exercises with local residents. They also lead the initial response to emergencies and disasters in their communities. As required by law, they have prepared emergency plans and maintain an emergency management organization. This is to ensure the safety of citizens when a situation escalates beyond the first-responder level.

B65 TELEPHONE & INTERNET SERVICE DURING AN EMERGENCY

WHEREAS during a catastrophic event such as a tsunami, earthquake, or police emergency, communication with emergency response organizations is critically important to public safety;

AND WHEREAS disruptions in land line telephone and internet services will cut many remote rural and coastal communities off from emergency response management systems:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the provincial government to ensure the necessary cell phone infrastructure is in place in order to provide timely emergency response if land line telephone transmission is disrupted.

RESPONSE: Ministry Citizens' Services and Open Government

The Province recognizes that cellular phone infrastructure is a vital part of emergency response.
This is the first resolution calling for government to ensure the availability and function of cellular service during emergencies; however, there have been many endorsed resolutions in the past asking for expanded cellular coverage. Government remains committed to working with TELUS and other cellular service providers to expand coverage across BC.

As part of the 10 year strategic telecommunications contract signed in 2011 with TELUS, there will be over 1,700 kilometres of new cellular coverage along unconnected highway segments by 2016 – a vital step forward for public safety. As of August 2013, 698 km of the over 1,700 km of planned new highway cellular coverage has been installed through the Connecting British Columbia Agreement with TELUS. The rollout of cellular services has a very aggressive build schedule given the geographic topography and the lengthy land access and permitting processes. The federal government regulates the telecommunications industry. Government continuously advocates for federal policies that benefit all BC citizens fairly and does its best to represent the interests of rural British Columbians to the federal government.

Other projects that are expanding communication infrastructure also include emergency communications components to ensure a robust emergency communications system in case of an emergency event.

B66 BIKE LANES ON PROVINCIAL ROAD RIGHTS-OF-WAY

WHEREAS the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure has requested local governments building paths on provincial road rights-of-way to provide invasive species management plans, have work overseen by an environmental monitor and assume responsibility for invasive plant management in the permitted area in perpetuity, in addition to providing for maintenance, including any sweeping which exceeds standards outlined in road maintenance contracts;

AND WHEREAS local governments are building paths to encourage people to use environmentally friendly alternatives to vehicles and should not be burdened with the costs of tasks within the jurisdiction of the Ministry, such as sweeping or ongoing invasive plant management:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM urge the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to ensure permit conditions for construction and maintenance do not provide a deterrent to local governments wishing to expand active transportation networks, by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure assuming full responsibility for the control of invasive plants on MOTI road rights of way and for maintaining adequate sweeping standards on bike lanes.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

The Ministry is committed to working with local Government to permit cycling and other pathways within Highway Rights of way where feasible. Each permit takes into account the unique nature of the right of way and of the path being sought and includes conditions for construction and for ongoing maintenance of the path.

Where the path passes through a known area of noxious weeds, conditions for construction includes conditions for weed management, including the requirement for an appropriate environmental management plan and monitor if necessary. Similarly, any maintenance and rehabilitation activities undertaken by local government must also follow appropriate weed management practices.

For clarification, the Ministry retains responsibility for noxious weed management within the highway rights of way and has an invasive weed program. This program is primarily delivered through partnership with local Invasive Species Councils. There is no intention to transfer that responsibility to local government.

With respect to sweeping, most bike paths permitted by the Ministry throughout the province pass in and out of highway rights of way. The owner of the path typically has the specialized equipment needed to sweep these paths as well as the understanding of the appropriate timing and frequency for maintenance. The ministry's maintenance contractor's sweeping equipment is designed for large highways and is generally not suitable for maintaining this type of pathway.

B67 PROHIBITING EXCESSIVE VEHICLE NOISE

WHEREAS the *Motor Vehicle Act* of BC requires that all motor vehicles have mufflers to ensure exhaust is expelled without excessive noise, yet with modifications of these muffler and baffler exhaust systems, the result is excessive motorcycle and motor boat noise;

AND WHEREAS the standards of noise levels established by the Society of Automotive Engineers; which were reviewed, evaluated and supported by the Canadian Motorcycle and Moped Industry Council and Transport Canada; have been set at 92 dB(A) when engine is at idle and 96 dB(A) when engine is at 2000 rpm and are measurable with appropriate decibel reading equipment:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government amend the *Motor Vehicle Act* to require that exhaust noise emitted from motorcycles and motor boats meet the noise level standards supported by Transport Canada, thus providing police officers clear definitions of "excessive vehicle noise";

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that police officers be provided the legislative tools necessary to enforce the *Motor Vehicle Act* prohibiting noise in excess of 92 dB(A) at engine idle and 96 dB(A) at 2000 rpm.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

The Small Vessel Regulations under the *Canada Shipping Act* requires that pleasure craft operating within five nautical miles from shore have an operating muffler with no modifications. Using authority in the *Community Charter*, municipalities may enact bylaws to restrict noise emissions – and some have bylaws applicable to marine pleasure crafts.

With respect to motor vehicles, the *Motor Vehicle Act* provides an offence for excessive motor vehicle noise, but the technology for reliably measuring noise in the field has only recently been recognized through the Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) technical standard. The BC Association of Chiefs of Police is working with the Ministry to implement the SAE standard as a means of measuring motorcycle exhaust noise at roadside.

B68 LOCAL GOVERNMENT INVOLVEMENT IN ICBC LITIGATION

WHEREAS ICBC frequently seeks to add local governments as parties to litigation in order to spread the costs of settlements or judgments;

AND WHEREAS in many cases there is little, if any, liability on the part of the local government;

AND WHEREAS ICBC's actions cause local governments to incur legal fees and sometimes contribute to settlements in order to avoid more significant costs:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government be requested to work with ICBC to ensure that local governments are only drawn into litigation when there is clear liability on their part.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

While it is certainly preferable that local governments are only drawn into litigation when there is clear liability by the local government, it is sometimes hard to determine this at the outset and under limitations provisions claimants have only two months to give notice to a local government and six months to take action.

ICBC has an obligation to keep insurance rates as low as possible for its customers and as a result, will always consider recovering costs where appropriate. ICBC will normally contact that local government to seek recovery before considering legal action and most of these situations are resolved without litigation.

B69 UNDERGROUND AQUIFER MAPPING FOR PROPOSED MINING PROJECTS

WHEREAS there are concerns that mining projects can negatively affect surrounding aquifers;

AND WHEREAS many people rely on these aquifers for drinking water:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government conduct comprehensive mapping and modelling of aquifers that may be affected by proposed mines before approving mine projects.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment

Government maps and classifies developed aquifers (aquifers currently being utilized as a water supply) on an on-going basis to build the inventory of aquifers in BC. More detailed mapping and modelling of aquifers are currently being carried out in priority areas in the east coast of Vancouver Island (Parksville-Qualicum area and in the Cowichan River Basin) and in northeast BC (Dawson Creek area), where groundwater use is high and intensive resource development is ongoing or expected.

With respect to impacts on aquifers from proposed mining projects, potential environmental impacts on groundwater related to a proposed mine must be adequately assessed before the permits for mining and the associated discharge of mine waste are issued by government. Large mine projects above a specified tonnage threshold are also subject to an environmental assessment review process. As part of the assessment, baseline information on groundwater, as well as assessment or modeling of potential impacts on groundwater, must be conducted by the proponent to the satisfaction of government before an Environmental Assessment certificate is issued for the proposed mine.

Government recognizes the need to continue to improve management and protection of the Province's groundwater resource, including protecting drinking water aquifers, and has committed to modernizing the *Water Act* to include provisions to regulate groundwater.

B70 RIPARIAN AREA REGULATIONS

WHEREAS there is a lack of cooperative, consistent and available enforcement efforts at all agency levels (local, provincial, federal) with respect to the contravention of Riparian Area Regulations (RAR);

AND WHEREAS citizens and local government are challenged to fairly apply, enforce and adhere to the regulations at a reasonable cost:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government review the watercourses designated under RAR to ensure that they have significance to fish and habitat health;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the provincial government appropriately enforce the RAR and provide adequate funds for said enforcement.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

The Province stands by its responsibility to protect fish habitat, which recognizes and contributes to community needs, a healthy environment and economic growth. The Riparian Areas Regulation (RAR), enacted in July 2004, is a tool available under the *Fish Protection Act* that directs local governments to protect the riparian fish habitat component of watercourses using their powers under Part 26 of the *Local Government Act*.

Implementation of the RAR includes the 2008 intergovernmental cooperation agreement between the federal and provincial governments, as well as the Union of BC Municipalities. In addition to establishing roles, responsibilities and dispute resolution mechanisms, the agreement stipulates that each party will be responsible for its own direct costs. The agreement also allows for each partner to engage in cost-recovery mechanisms as necessary. Although not part of the RAR itself, these cost-recovery mechanisms often include local governments requiring developers to pay any habitat protection costs associated with their proposed activity.

The RAR does not specifically prescribe how the riparian areas protection should be implemented by local government and does not require a monitoring program from the local government, but it does require local government to cooperate in monitoring, enforcement, and education. A Protocol of Interaction for Responding to Non-Compliance was jointly developed to instruct federal, provincial and local government staff on how to proceed in a coordinated fashion when faced with a RAR non-compliance situation. Ministry staff work with local governments as per the Protocol of Interaction in situations of RAR non-compliance, recognizing that many of the enforcement activities pursued under RAR would be violations of the local government bylaw.

A compliance monitoring framework was developed in 2007 by statisticians at Simon Fraser University that recommends a sample size based on the number of reports submitted in a given year and provides a 90 percent confidence level. Between 2007 and 2011, 521 assessment reports were reviewed by the Ministry for accuracy and proper implementation. When workloads prevent Ministry staff from conducting monitoring, experienced Qualified Environmental Professionals (QEPs) are hired on contract to complete the work. The Province continues to apply monitoring results to update the training course provided by the Vancouver Island University and to develop regional workshops to improve assessment report preparation by QEPs and overall implementation of the RAR program.

The purpose of the RAR methodology is to provide a means by which a QEP will assess a watercourse for fish habitat. It would be cost prohibitive for the Province to assess every stream for fish habitat in the areas where RAR applies, especially when considering that most of streams in British Columbia contribute to fish habitat. Depending on the implementation option a local government chooses, they can either absorb the cost of having streams in their jurisdiction assessed and mapped or relay the cost onto the proponent wishing to develop near a stream.

B71 COORDINATED ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

WHEREAS the Fraser River Estuary Management Program was discontinued on March 1, 2013;

AND WHEREAS changes have been made to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) Habitat Protection Program without consultation with local governments;

AND WHEREAS these changes will result in the loss of the coordinated environmental review process for in-stream works, shoreline development and other projects that may impact the marine ecosystem:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government be requested to initiate discussions with the federal government and local government regarding the reinstatement of an independent agency to coordinate environmental review processes for in-stream and shoreline works.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment

The recent federal changes introduced under Bill C-38 and Bill C-45, along with the downsizing and restructuring of the Fisheries Protection Programs are having an impact on how programs are managed and delivered. The Ministry of Environment is working with the natural resource sector ministries and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) to fully understand the implications of the changes to our regulatory framework and to the delivery of programs to ensure that a high level of environmental protection is maintained.

The decision to sunset the Fraser River Estuary Management Program (FREMP) arose from the findings of a program review on the effectiveness and efficiency of the program. The review was contracted in 2012 to Ernst and Young. Post-sunset, the former FREMP's Coordinated Project Review process, continues but is now being provided by agencies directly; this is a more cost effective approach than the former model of agencies funding a third party for that work. The Port of Vancouver (the Port) receives the incoming applications for foreshore and upland developments within the Port area and refers them by email to relevant agencies for review and comment. DFO, Ministry of Education (MOE), Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations (FLNRO) and the Port continues to coordinate and collaborate on the environmental stewardship of the Fraser River and Burrard estuaries through both a Partner's Committee (focused on strategic direction and inter-agency collaboration, to which MOE is a member), and Management Committee, (focused on addressing more operational issues such as project reviews, to which FLNRO is a member).

The Province would welcome UBCM's input on any concerns arising from changes to the *Fisheries Act,* DFO restructuring and the closure of the FREMP program.

B72 GENETICALLY ENGINEERED PLANTS & ANIMALS

WHEREAS some Genetically Engineered (GE) crops, through pollination, can disperse their pollen and genes indiscriminately and potentially contaminate non-GE crops, resulting in lawsuits, loss of organic certification, and marketability;

AND WHEREAS there is particular concern with the transfer of DNA between species and the potential unintended consequences, especially with animal species;

AND WHEREAS Vancouver Island and associated coastal communities are isolated from other agricultural areas in British Columbia, which can provide practical approaches to avoiding contamination by GE organisms and these locations suggest that there is an opportunity for local farmers to provide organic production, to help maintain long-term sustainability, to foster a living seed bank, and to be a refuge from genetically engineered contamination:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM ask the British Columbia government to legislate the prohibition of importing, exporting and growing plants and seeds containing genetically engineered DNA, and raising GE animals within BC, and to declare through legislation that the province of BC is a GE Free area in respect to all plant and animal species.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Agriculture

The Province recognizes that production of genetically engineered (GE) living organisms, such as plants and animals, as well as GE viruses attracts considerable public attention.

Declaring regions or all of BC to be GE-free with respect to all plant and animal species would facilitate organic production, provide a refuge for non-GE seed living banks and enable production of other GE-free products sought by export and domestic markets. The Province recognizes that some UBCM members have indicated their preference for GE-free status of their jurisdictions.

Responsibility for the evaluation of the safety of GE products rests with the Federal Government. BC considers that the Federal food safety and environmental evaluation processes for GE products must be kept current to ensure a safe food supply. The process must be transparent, based on good scientific analysis and acceptable to independent scientists.

B73 BEAR AWARE FUNDING

WHEREAS the evolving criteria and competitive process for securing Bear Aware/Wild Safe BC funding is counterproductive to local governments requiring funding certainty to ensure continuity of a service provided in partnership with other organizations;
AND WHEREAS small rural local governments are less able to respond to evolving program criteria and funding requirements:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM urge the Ministry of Environment to provide financial support and work with the BC Conservation Foundation to revise the funding criteria for the Bear Aware/Wild Safe program to ensure interested communities can participate without having to compete against other jurisdictions for funding.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment

The Ministry of Environment supports the work of the Bear Aware and Wild Safe BC programs and would like to continue as a full partner in their delivery. Bear Aware education is an integral component of the provincial "Bear Smart" Communities Program and, as such, must remain active and accessible throughout the Province.

In past years, funding to support the Bear Aware Program has been provided by the Ministry. Government is very pleased to have provided funding to Bear Aware in the amount of $357,000 over the fiscal years 2010/11 and 2011/12 and committed a further $225,000 for 2012/13. The Ministry remains hopeful that funding will be available in the future but, unfortunately, can make no commitments at this time given fiscal challenges.

The BC Conservation Foundation (BCCF) has endeavored to provide a variety of program levels to ensure that every community has the opportunity to receive support. Options range from a Community Coordinator program where delivery specialists are hired and supervised by the BCCF to Seed-Grants of up to $2000, that allow smaller communities the chance to participate. Bear Aware programs do not normally meet Habitat Conservation Trust Fund criteria but the BCCF is sometimes able to access restorative justice awards that are specific to area and/or funding criteria.

The Ministry will work with the BCCF to ensure the process for awarding available funding is fair and equitable and strives to ensure that every community requesting support to deliver a Bear Aware/Wild Safe BC program, receives it.

Communities are also encouraged to look at alternative delivery mechanisms that would allow the Bear Aware/Wild Safe BC programs to continue operating and providing educational services to British Columbia communities. The Ministry will continue to encourage British Columbians to take responsibility for proper management of wildlife attractants and minimizing conflicts. Recent amendments to the *Wildlife Act* give conservation officers the ability to issue tickets or appearance notices for a court appearance to deal with people who repeatedly and negligently fail to secure attractants for dangerous wildlife. These tools compliment existing tools and are expected to reduce the number of large predators, such as bears, that come into conflict with people

B74 FUNDING FOR DEER MANAGEMENT EDUCATION

WHEREAS the increasing population of deer in urbanized and agricultural areas is impacting agricultural crop production and public health and safety due to deer-auto collisions, aggressive deer-human and deer-pet interactions and transmission of disease;

AND WHEREAS there is limited funding available to develop comprehensive public education programs needed to augment and support regional and local deer management strategies:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the Province to provide funding for regional public education programs to support deer management strategies.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

The Province believes that no single solution to all urban deer issues exists because every community differs in geography, urban wildlife population and handling capacity for extant wildlife.

The Province is committed to partnering with local governments to facilitate the development of socially acceptable urban deer management solutions. Ministry staff assists communities in managing urban wildlife conflicts in a number of ways, including participation on community-based planning committees, provision of technical advice, development of hunting regulations, issuing permits to manage urban wildlife populations and loaning available equipment to communities as required.

Several communities have already made good progress in developing community-owned management plans. The Province will continue to work with local communities across the Province to help them manage urban deer conflicts.

B75 CARBON SEQUESTRATION OFFSETS – LOCAL GOVERNMENT OWNED TREES

WHEREAS most local governments in B.C. have signed on to the Province's Climate Action Charter committing to be carbon neutral in their operations by 2012;

AND WHEREAS the provincial Climate Action Secretariat has advised that carbon sequestered by trees in a local government's urban forest and park lands is not eligible to be counted as offsetting carbon output under the Climate Action Charter:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province of BC instruct the provincial Climate Action Secretariat to change their position regarding acceptance of carbon sequestered by trees owned by a local government as an accepted offset of carbon produced.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development

The joint Provincial-UBCM Green Communities Committee (GCC) has worked with local governments to develop a practical, flexible and credible approach to carbon neutrality that enables municipalities and regional districts to partially or wholly reduce their carbon liability by investing in measurable emission reduction projects outside of their corporate boundaries.

Under the carbon neutral framework, local governments can select from a list of emission reduction projects for which GCC has developed simplified formulas to assist in the calculation of greenhouse gas emission reductions. Local governments may also invest in other measurable emission reduction projects outside of the corporate boundary, including carbon sequestration, subject to the GCC's seven project eligibility criteria and third party validation and verification of the project.

Additional information on the carbon neutral framework and the emission reduction project options are described in the 'Becoming Carbon Neutral' guidance document, available online at www.toolkit.bc.ca

The GCC is continuing to work with local governments to look for opportunities to develop new simplified project formulas under the carbon neutral local government framework, including those for forest carbon sequestration. Local governments with significant forestry projects may also wish to consider the Government of British Columbia's Forest Carbon Offset Protocol (FCOP), which is used to guide the design, development, quantification and verification of BC forest carbon offsets from a broad range of forest activities on private and public land in BC.

B76 INVASIVE ZEBRA & QUAGGA MUSSELS

WHEREAS species introductions are the leading cause of biodiversity loss in lake ecosystems and are a growing threat to aquaculture in the Canadian coastal ecosystems;

AND WHEREAS invasive non-indigenous species are recognized as one of the most serious environmental problems in the world:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the federal and provincial governments to take immediate action to implement legislation and border controls whereby owners of aquatic equipment are obligated to prevent the spread of invasive Zebra and Quagga mussels to the province of British Columbia.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment

The Province recognizes the serious threat posed by invasive Zebra and Quagga mussels.

In response to this and other aquatic invasive species threats, government amended the Controlled Alien Species Regulation under the *Wildlife Act* in December 2012. The amendments prohibit the possession, transport or sale of listed species, which includes Zebra and Quagga mussels and enable conservation officers and other law enforcement staff to stop, inspect and impound mussel fouled boats. UBCM was informed of this pending regulation change and confirmed its support in early November 2012.

The Province is working with the federal government to have Zebra and Quagga mussels added to the Federal Aquatic Species Regulation. This will prohibit the importation of live mussels into Canada and is required to enable the Canada Border Services Agency to stop mussel fouled boats from entering the country.

The Ministry, in collaboration with Fisheries and Oceans Canada and Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations, is monitoring for Zebra and Quagga mussels across BC. The Ministry is also working with the Invasive Species Council of BC on a major project (under the Take Action Initiative) to reduce the risk of these species introductions by promoting 'Clean, Drain, and Dry' with recreational boaters and providing training and decontamination equipment and services.

As part of the response, the provincial Conservation Service Hotline, or RAPP line, has been set up to deal with calls regarding mussel infested boats. The new procedures for boat inspection have also been field tested during a two day boat inspection blitz on July 4 and 5 2013, in the Okanagan.

Zebra and Quagga mussels are currently not found in British Columbia or the Pacific Northwest states. The Province is a partner in cross-border initiatives and alert networks that have been established to prevent the introduction of these mussels from infested waters. The Province is working to strengthen provincial communication and response strategies.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

At this time, there is no evidence that Zebra or Quagga mussels have become established in British Columbia. They are also not established in Oregon, Idaho, Washington, Montana, Alberta, Saskatchewan or Manitoba.

In 2009, British Columbia became a partner in the Columbia Basin Rapid Response Plan, which includes representation from Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Montana. This system provides for early detection and rapid response to invasive species threats. Government is immediately notified whenever Zebra mussels or Quagga mussels are detected in the Columbia River basin.

In December 2012, the provincial government amended the Controlled Alien Species Regulation to further restrict non-native species. No invasive Zebra or Quagga mussel, alive or dead, is allowed to remain on boats or related equipment. Failure to clean the mussels off boats or equipment could result in a fine of up to $100,000. The provincial government has also produced public education material about invasive aquatic species that is distributed at boat launches and related tourist and recreation facilities.

Three high-pressure washing stations are available for use at designated boat launches as part of the "Clean, Drain and Dry" program operated by the Invasive Species Council of BC. This program teaches boaters proper techniques to remove aquatic animal and plant material from their boats, trailers and gear. The washing stations are deployed strategically in southern BC to provide a rapid response to any perceived threat from invasive mussels. Government is also considering roadside inspection stations to stop boats and inspect them for mussels.

B77 MAJOR APPLIANCE STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

WHEREAS the removal of hazardous materials and refrigerants remains the responsibility of the recycler and processor;

AND WHEREAS the British Columbia Major Appliance Stewardship program does not meet the standards of Extended Producer Responsibility:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request that the British Columbia Minister of Environment require that all refrigerants contained within major appliances become the responsibility of the manufacturer of that product for the entire life-cycle of these materials.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment

Through the Recycling Regulation, the Province mandates and supports the practice of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR). British Columbia's Industry-led Product Stewardship programs require producers of designated products, including refrigerant-containing major appliances, to take responsibility for the life cycle management of their products, including collection and recycling. For transparency and accountability, all programs must report on the management of the products in adherence with the order of preference in the pollution prevention hierarchy.

The Major Appliance Recycling Roundtable (MARR) Stewardship Plan and program operates around the long-standing market-driven EPR system for major household appliances. The MARR plan is focused on enhancing the performance and transparency of this existing market-based system. The Ministry of Environment is aware of the current challenges associated with the MARR program and is working with MARR to address them.

In addressing their program challenges, MARR's actions to date have included: contracting a consultant to perform a system study; forming the MARR-Local Government Advisory Council (MARR-LGAC) and developing the Major Appliance Processing Standard.

The Ministry of Environment will continue to monitor MARR's progress.

B78 FOREST STEWARDSHIP PLAN EXTENSION

WHEREAS forest stewardship plan development is the public's only opportunity to provide formal comment on forest practices in a potentially large area;

AND WHEREAS forest stewardship plans have a five year term and can be extended to 10 years by government:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that when applying for a forest stewardship plan extension the licensee should be legally required to notify the public of the renewal application and the public should have the right to have any concerns noted and addressed.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

The provincial government will consider forest stewardship concerns as part of its ongoing evaluation of the *Forest and Range Practices Act* and its supporting policy framework. Under current legislation, site plans for cutblocks and roads are available to the public upon request. The Ministry has encouraged regional districts to meet with forest licensees and to contact the local resource district office for assistance in this regard.

B79 FOREST STEWARDSHIP & INDUSTRIAL ACTIVITY

WHEREAS forest stewardship plan development is the public's only opportunity to provide formal comment on forest practices in a potentially large area;

AND WHEREAS it is important for communities and the public to be aware of resource industry activity in areas where they live, work or recreate:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that forest companies be required to establish and maintain a publicly available project website to ensure public awareness of ongoing activities and construction schedules making all monitoring reports prepared during operation available to the public on the project website.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

The provincial government will consider forest stewardship concerns as part of its ongoing evaluation of the *Forest and Range Practices Act* and its supporting policy framework. Under current legislation, site plans for cutblocks and roads are available to the public upon request. The Ministry has encouraged the regional district to meet with forest licensees and to contact the local resource district office for assistance in this regard.

B80 MINERAL TENURE ACT MODERNIZATION

WHEREAS British Columbia's *Mineral Tenure Act* has remained substantially unchanged since the 1800'sand is not suited to our modern day land base and the demands of legitimate competing interests and values, with the present *Mineral Tenure Act* giving no weight to other economic activities, current or future, in areas affected by mining claims including tourism, forestry and farming;

AND WHEREAS local governments and First Nations deserve greater latitude to shape their economic development paths and protect the full range of their residents' interests, and a modern *Mineral Tenure Act* could ensure adequate regional planning would take place, recognizing vital water, agricultural and other resources on which all communities depend:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request that the Province of British Columbia undertake abroad-based public engagement process similar to that being used to amend BC's *Water Act* and fairly engage First Nations and local governments to determine how best to modernize the *Mineral Tenure Act* and related legislation in a way that ensures the full range of interests – including social, cultural, ecological and economic – are given fair consideration on BC's land base.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Energy and Mines

Government is open to input on how to ensure BC continues to have a modern and streamlined regulatory framework for the mining sector. The *Mineral Tenure Act* does have provisions for the interests of the surface rights holders.

Formal notification to a landowner is required prior to accessing a claim area that is located on private land. If landowner and claim holders are not able to agree on terms to access a claim, they may ask the Chief Gold Commissioner to mediate and failing that may appeal to the Surface Rights Board. If a claim holder wishes to conduct exploration or mining activity that involves mechanized disturbance, a permit under the *Mines Act* is required.

B81 GREEN JOBS PLAN FOR BC

WHEREAS Green Jobs initiative respects the values of British Columbians in ensuring ecosystem health and strong communities;

AND WHEREAS BC is well positioned to capitalise on this emerging trend and many communities are already showing leadership;

AND WHEREAS Green Jobs will increase resilience and prosperity in our communities:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM join the call for the Province to create and support a bold Green Jobs Plan for British Columbia.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training and Minister Responsible for Labour

Government recognizes the importance of the green economy to job creation and continues its efforts to advance it. Liquefied natural gas (LNG) presents a once-in-a-generation opportunity for British Columbia and one of the key priorities of BC's LNG strategy is to maintain our Province's leadership on climate change and clean energy.

Together, with industry, communities and First Nations, the Province is committed building the world's cleanest LNG facilities. Natural gas is the world's cleanest-burning fossil fuel and BC's LNG exports can significantly lower global greenhouse gas emissions by replacing coal-fired power plants and oil-based transportation fuels with a much cleaner alternative.

The development of BC's LNG sector will create significant employment opportunities in the construction, supply, service, operation and maintenance of LNG facilities and pipe lines. These opportunities will include:

- 21,600 jobs directly involved in the building of LNG export facilities and associated pipelines at peak construction expected to occur in 2016/2017.
- 41,900 jobs in the industries that supply goods and services during peak construction.
- 2,400 permanent jobs to operate and maintain the plants and pipelines.
- 61,700 jobs to support LNG operations, including workers required to drill, produce, process and transport the natural gas required to feed the export facilities.

The Province is working with the BC Natural Gas Workforce Strategy Committee to build the workforce to take advantage of the tremendous employment opportunities created by LNG.

Supporting green jobs through training and collaboration across sectors to support green job creation efforts across the economy, the Province provides a range of programs that support sectors in understanding and responding to the emerging human resource opportunities and needs related to the green economy. For example, several sectors have used the provincial Labour Market Partnership Program (LMP) to understand how emerging green technologies will impact their workforce needs. These LMPs include residential construction LMP (changing training requirements related to green building were highlighted as a key driver of a recent LMP that researched the feasibility of developing alternative delivery models for apprenticeship training in the residential construction industry). Identifying essential training needs for aboriginal youth in BC's eco-energy sector, building on a Globe Foundation LMP, which assessed the job creation potential in BC's clean economy and the recent Fraser Basin LMP improved human resources capacity for supporting renewable energy by developing strategies to increase participation among aboriginal youth, young people in general and other under-employed segments of BC's population.

To support job creation efforts, the Province also provides a range of training programs funded by the Labour Market Agreement. Programs targeting green job opportunities include:

The Targeted Skills Shortages Program, which targets the clean technology and the green economy sectors. Through the program, local service providers help businesses with fewer than 100 employees identify Labour Market Agreement-eligible, low-skilled employees, develop training plans and access funding for training.

The Employment Skills Access program funded the Northern Lights College's Clean Energy Training Program, has trained participants to work with clean energy, including wind and solar energy.

Through the Aboriginal Community Based Delivery Program, the Province is funding training for environmental restoration at the Nicola Valley Institute of Technology, Building Restoration at the Kwantlen Polytechnique, and Ecological Restoration at the BC Institute for Technology.

At this time, government does not have plans for a stand-alone, green jobs plan. Initiatives to grow the green economy will continue to be captured under the existing, over-arching framework of Canada Starts Here: The BC Jobs Plan.

B82 SUPPORT FOR BC ASSOCIATION OF AGRICULTURAL FAIRS & EXHIBITIONS

WHEREAS BC's agricultural fairs and exhibitions are in the strategic position to continue and enhance their work of educating and promoting BC agriculture awareness through serving excess of 1.5 million visitors to BC's agricultural fairs, exhibitions and related festivals each year;

AND WHEREAS in over 50 communities throughout BC, the use of a combined total of 20,000+ volunteers has resulted in affordable family entertainment and agriculture awareness;

AND WHEREAS agriculture, food production and food security is an important economic contributor to the British Columbia economy:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request that the provincial government negotiate a viable funding envelope with the BC Association of Agricultural Fairs and Exhibitions to be included in the Ministry of Agriculture budget, in order to preserve the existence of agriculture fairs and exhibitions across the province.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Agriculture

The Ministry of Agriculture (Ministry) is aware of the positive impacts that BC's agricultural fairs and exhibitions have in educating and promoting BC agriculture awareness and that agriculture, food production and food security are important economic contributors to the British Columbia economy.

The BC Association of Agricultural Fairs and Exhibitions (BCAAFE) has received verbal and financial support from previous Ministers of Agriculture, resulting in ongoing and sustained financial assistance over the past decade.

The Ministry provided annual grants averaging $210,000 between 1997/98 and 2009/10. In 2010/11, BCAAFE received a grant of $75,000 to implement their 2010-2015 Strategic Plan. Part of BCAAFE's Strategic Plan was to identify non-government long-term funding solutions. The Ministry encourages BCAAFE to continue to identify alternative funding opportunities.

In 2013, BCAAFE succeeded in receiving funding from other sources including $20,200 from the Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC for a study on BC's agricultural fairs and their impact in BC communities. In addition, Community Gaming Grants (Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development) provided BCAAFE with $105,000 to sustain core operations in 2011 and 2012.

B83 MENTAL HEALTH PATIENT INTAKE PROCEDURES & FACILITIES

WHEREAS police have become front line mental health workers responding to calls for service where, in many cases, the subject of complaint requires specialized medical or psychiatric care rather than police attention;

AND WHEREAS the amount of time police spend in hospital guarding mental health clients can be significant and represents a poor use of police resources:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government be requested to invest in resources to create an efficient process of mental health patient intake, including the provision of secure holding facilities and security personnel trained to guard patients in order to reduce the use of police resources in this capacity.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

The Province recognizes the difficulties that police officers face dealing with persons with severe mental illnesses and/or substance use problems. As well, this client population consumes a disproportionate amount of health care resources, through repeat visits to hospital emergency rooms and other crisis response services.

Whenever appropriate, redirection of individuals with mental illness and/or substance use problems in contact with police to appropriate mental health, substance use, social and support services is essential. This process should be effective, efficient and based on best practices.

In 2010, the Province released *Healthy Minds, Healthy People: A Ten-Year Plan to Address Mental Health and Substance Use in British Columbia*. The Plan takes a whole systems approach to mental health promotion, prevention of mental illness and problematic substance use, harm reduction and care, treatment and supported recovery. A specific action in the Plan recognizes the need for improved and coordinated responses for people experiencing mental health and substance use problems who are in contact with the criminal justice system.

In February 2013, the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) released the BC Policing and Community Safety Plan (BCPP) that identifies actions to work with stakeholders to promote best practices and expand integrated police/health initiatives across the Province and to develop resource-efficient and effective strategies for interaction between police officers and persons with a mental health and/or substance use problem.

In response, the Ministry of Health and the MoJ are working collaboratively on a number of joint projects at the provincial and regional level, including:

- Development of a provincial Framework that will assist police and health authorities in developing local/regional protocols for people experiencing a mental health and/or substance use crisis that come into contact with police. This Framework will support improved information sharing and continuity of care through better integrated approaches and efficient and effective strategies to improve police and health care service interaction. This Framework will build on existing best practices and evidence-based models of care and include an efficient process of mental health patient intake.

- Development of protocols between local hospital emergency and police departments in Vancouver Coastal Health Authority and Fraser Health Authority. These protocols include changes to the sharing of information between police and the hospital emergency department and intake process of mental health patients detained under section 28 of the *Mental Health Act*.

- In larger urban centres, mobile crisis team partnerships between health authorities and local police have been established to provide improved, community-based crisis care for those struggling with mental illness, such as Car 87 in Vancouver and Car 40 in Kamloops.

- Thirteen Assertive Community Treatment teams exist in BC providing 24/7 wrap-around tertiary level community care to individuals with severe mental illness and concurrent substance use disorders, who have high hospital bed days, challenges in functioning with daily living, maintaining safe and appropriate housing and are often in contact with the correctional system.

The Province recognizes that the safety and security of the police, health care staff, the general public and clients is paramount when dealing with complex and potentially aggressive behaviours. Health authorities have secure facilities in in-patient units designated under the *Mental Health Act* in every major community in the Province.

Hospital standards and guidelines are under development for secure rooms that exist in all designated facilities, including rooms in the Emergency Department of the designated hospital. These standards will address health and safety risks of clients with complex behaviours requiring a safe environment, including training requirements for health care staff.

B84 HOARDING & ITS IMPACTS ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

WHEREAS compulsive hoarding is a psychological condition which is estimated to occur in about 5% of the population and is associated with fire, health and safety hazards which pose an extreme risk to the hoarder but also to first responders and others living in close proximity to the hoarding unit;

AND WHEREAS local government, through fire protection, licensing and/or standards of maintenance bylaws, must inspect hoarding units and issue orders to address any fire, health and safety hazards;

AND WHEREAS local government staff do not have the mandate or skill set to deal with the psychological condition of hoarding and often observe deteriorating conditions between inspections;

AND WHEREAS the City of Vancouver and Vancouver Coastal Health have established a Hoarding Action Response Team, in which mental health workers are assigned to work hands-on with hoarders to reduce fire, health and safety hazards and to do follow-up maintenance:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the health authorities work with local government to address the increasing prevalence of hoarding by allocating appropriate resources and staff and by providing care and support to hoarders to enable them to manage and reduce risks associated with their psychological condition.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

Hoarding is a behavior characterized by excessive acquisition and the inability to discard or part with possessions, regardless of their actual value. For some people, their living spaces become so cluttered that the risk of fire, health problems such as mold and pests, and structural problems become a major concern. Hoarding is not only a risk to the resident's home, but also to their neighbours, and to first responders such as firefighters.

People with hoarding conditions are often distressed, their ability to function is usually affected, and they have varying levels of insight into their problems. About 75 percent of those with a hoarding disorder also have a mood and/or anxiety disorder. However, not everyone who is collecting excessively is considered to have a hoarding disorder.

As indicated in *Healthy Minds, Healthy People: A Ten-Year Plan to Address Mental Health and Substance Use in BC*, the Province is working to incrementally improve mental health and substance use services across the province. The plan calls for integrated evidence-based primary and community care for people with severe and complex mental disorders and/or substance dependence.

In April 2012, Vancouver became the first city in North America to launch a formal integrated approach to help people diagnosed with a hoarding disorder through the development of a Hoarding Action Response Team (HART) program.

The program consists of a city property use inspector, a fire inspector and two mental health workers employed by Vancouver Coastal Health. The HART team is a pilot project, the effectiveness of which is being evaluated by UBC. The study is expected to be completed by June 2014, and will inform municipalities and health authorities regarding ways to support citizens with a hoarding disorder.

Meanwhile, people with serious mental disorders receive treatment through the health authorities' mental health and substance use services.

Given the potential benefits of this collaborative approach to support British Columbians with a hoarding disorder to maintain their housing in a safe manner and improve their quality of life, the Province supports collaboration between local governments and health authorities to plan and provide appropriate effective and efficient services for this client population based on local demands and available resources.

B85 TIERED ELECTRICITY RATES

WHEREAS the British Columbia Utilities Commission, which regulates energy utility rates in the province of BC, has approved a tiered electricity rate structure so that within a two-month billing period one rate is charged for power usage up to 1,600 kWh, but a higher rate is levied on power usage over 1,600 kWh;

AND WHEREAS low-income residents of BC are specifically vulnerable to such a tiered rate structure because they often live in rental facilities, with limited resources or options to reduce electricity usage:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM call on the provincial government to review the impact of a tiered electricity rate structure on low-income British Columbians, and amend the tiered rate structure to minimize the impact on those in our society who are less fortunate and have limited options to reduce their electricity usage.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that if the results of the review of the tiered rate structure reveal a negative impact, that amendments be made to minimize the effect for those less fortunate and those who have limited options to reduce their electricity usage (i.e. no access to natural gas).

RESPONSE: Ministry of Energy and Mines

The BC Utilities Commission (BCUC) approved rate increases and a conservation rate structure for FortisBC's residential customers effective January 1, 2013. FortisBC's conservation rate consists of two block rates. A lower rate is applied to the first two-thirds of average consumption and a higher rate is applied to the remaining third. The higher rate on above-average consumption is designed to provide a price signal to encourage customers to use less electricity and make investments in energy efficiency.

BC Hydro has the same structure for its residential rates. The average customer will not pay more under this new rate structure. In fact, 75 percent of customers will see their bills stay the same or go down. However, larger homes and homes with electric space or water heaters or other amenities such as hot tubs or swimming pools may see higher bills.

While the Ministry is monitoring the impact of the conservation rate structure, FortisBC is a privately-owned utility and its rates are regulated by the BCUC.

B86 PERSONAL INFORMATION OF ELECTED OFFICIALS

WHEREAS during the "open delegation" portion of a recent council meeting, a member of the public broadcast the private residential address of a member of council as part of a PowerPoint presentation;

AND WHEREAS this experience raised concerns about the personal privacy and security of elected officials:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government amend s. 73(7) of the *Local Government Act* to exempt, when special circumstances are presented, the public release of an elected official's home address.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development

Government recognizes the need to establish a balance between transparent government and protecting council members' privacy and safety. The residential address that candidates must provide under *Local Government Act,* section 73 is important information for some voters. For example, some voters take candidates' places of residence into account when deciding which candidates would best represent the interests of their neighbourhood.

The *Local Government Act* does include safeguards intended to protect the personal information that candidates must provide under section 73. Section 77 requires local government Chief Electoral Officers (CEO) to issue a public notice of election that includes candidates' residential addresses. Under section 77, candidates can request that the CEO replace their residential address in the public notice with information about the jurisdiction in which the candidate lives.

Additionally, *Local Government Act,* section 153 (6) limits the use of personal information provided in section 73 to purposes authorized by the *Local Government Act.* If there is uncertainty about whether an intended use of personal information is permitted, local governments and members of the public are encouraged to seek legal advice before using the personal information.

B87 WORKPLACE BULLYING & HARASSMENT

WHEREAS under the BC Human Rights Code, employees are entitled to work in an environment which is free from harassment, bullying, and discrimination;

AND WHEREAS some elected officials undertake to harass, bully, or discriminate against others within the local government workplace, and current provincial regulations lack the teeth to punish or enforce the removal from office elected officials who abuse their office by harassing, bullying or discriminating against others:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government take immediate steps to put in place Legislation that will enforce severe consequences, including removal from office, for persons who abuse their office as elected officials by harassing, bullying, or discriminating against others within their local government environment.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training and Minister Responsible for Labour

The Government of British Columbia takes all matters concerning bullying and harassment in the workplace seriously. The safety of all British Columbia workers is a priority for government and such behaviour in the workplace is completely unacceptable. Government is very appreciative that the UBCM convention addressed the issue of bullying and harassment, as it impacts local government employers, supervisors and workers in such a direct and clear manner.

Government and WorkSafeBC have taken strong action to address this matter. Government passed Bill 14, *Workers Compensation Amendment Act, 2011,* in May 2012. The primary change was to amend the mental stress provisions of the *Workers Compensation Act*, which previously compensated acute reactions to a single, sudden and traumatic event, but excluded chronic stress conditions arising from the workplace. The *Workers Compensation Act* now provides that mental disorders resulting from one or more traumatic events, as well as mental disorders resulting from significant work-related stressors such as bullying and harassment (i.e., chronic stress), are now compensated. There is explicit recognition of bullying or harassment as significant work-related stressors that can result in a compensable mental disorder. Government made its position on bullying and harassment clear by stating that these destructive behaviours are simply not acceptable at any level.

As part of this initiative, WorkSafeBC was tasked with developing a policy on bullying and harassment under the existing Occupational Health and Safety Regulation to prevent and address this behaviour in the workplace. WorkSafeBC's Board of Directors approved this policy at its March 2013 meeting and WorkSafeBC has posted the approved policy on its website and has sent e-news notifications to over 10,000 stakeholders in BC. The policy became effective on November 1, 2013. Like all other employers in British Columbia, local governments will also be responsible for ensuring that they adhere to this policy.

On October 2, 2013, WorkSafeBC held a stakeholder and media event in Vancouver, to mark the introduction of its Occupational Health and Safety policies on bullying and harassment and to promote the resources that will be made available in a Workplace Bullying and Harassment Tool Kit. Some municipal leaders may have attended this important event.

Government encourages all persons working for BC local governments, whether they be elected officials, supervisors or workers, to view the following link to the WorkSafeBC website. It provides important, detailed information as to the duties and responsibilities of employers, supervisors and workers regarding bullying and harassment in the workplace.
http://www2.worksafebc.com/Topics/BullyingAndHarassment/home.asp

Regarding the specific concern that government takes steps to enact Legislation that will provide further consequences for bullying and harassment in the workplace, government does not have plans at this time to introduce additional legislative measures. Government has taken action by amending the *Workers Compensation Act* and WorkSafeBC has directly addressed this issue in its regulations and policies. Government is confident that these actions, which are unparalleled in other jurisdictions across Canada, will have a significant impact on addressing these unacceptable workplace behaviours. Local governments can also adopt formal policies to promote a bullying and harassment-free workplace. Such policies could assist in ensuring elected officials are clear on the expectations for their role in dealing with staff. Additionally, provisions in collective agreements and provisions in contracts for management can draw on Provincial legislation and policy guidelines (such as the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation) to assist in setting out the rights and duties of employees.

B88 SHADOW POPULATIONS

WHEREAS local governments in rural British Columbia are experiencing a growing number of people living adjacent to their borders which is placing additional service provision pressures on these communities;

AND WHEREAS the local governments are not presently allowed to include this 'shadow' population in their overall population count even though municipal services are utilized by them:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request that the provincial government amend the *Community Charter* to allow local governments the ability to conduct municipal census similar to the Determination of Population Regulation 63/2001 and Amendment 10/2013, under Alberta's *Municipal Government Act*.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development

Government is aware of the challenges and affects shadow populations have on communities.

Any change to the way population is calculated any would represent a fundamental shift in long-standing Provincial policy. While government is not considering changes to the way population is calculated at this time, if there is such a revision in the future, considerable policy research and consultation into the broader implications resulting from local government census changes would be required.

Government would have to understand why do local governments want to increase their census population? If it is for unconditional grants (namely Small Community Grants), increasing the population will raise grants for some municipalities (under 5,000 people) but will potentially decrease or eliminate grants for other municipalities (over 5,000 people).

Further, it is important for local governments to understand that by increasing the census population, some municipalities may have to assume responsibility for police funding, as they exceed the cut-off population of 5,000.

B89 TWO-TIERED POLICE FORCE

WHEREAS many British Columbia municipalities are experiencing rising RCMP costs, and have no other options available for policing;

AND WHEREAS the Province of Alberta has legislated the *Peace Officer Act*, providing a level of local government law enforcement with authority under the following provincial statutes:

- *Gaming & Liquor Act*
- *Traffic Safety Act*
- *Motor Transport Act*
- *Dangerous Goods Act*
- *Environmental Protection & Enhancement Act*
- *Dangerous Dogs Act*
- *Provincial Offenses Procedure Act*;

AND WHEREAS the Peace Officers support and collaborate with the RCMP so that the RCMP can focus their resources on major crime, while the Peace Officers deal with:

- enforcement of all of municipal bylaws;
- educating the public about various bylaws and regulations;
- school and community youth safety programs;
- the provision of conflict resolution and mediation services; and
- assisting fire/RCMP/Regional Emergency Services:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request that the Province of British Columbia work in concert with the RCMP to amend the *Police Act* to allow another level of policing services for local governments in order that they might have options that will achieve good fiscal balance, while maintaining a strong police force.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Justice

The Ministry recognizes that policing costs are a growing issue for municipalities and the full spectrum of law enforcement and public safety functions, such as special provincial constables, auxiliaries, by-law officers and private security, need to be examined.

Under Action Item #2 of the BC Policing and Public Safety Plan, the Ministry aims to develop a public safety model including existing and new categories of law enforcement personnel to provide a range of responses appropriate to the risk to public safety. To this end, Ministry staff will be conducting a comprehensive review which will include law enforcement, private security and public safety groups in the Province and their associated legislative authorities.

B90 EMERGENCY SOCIAL SERVICES & TEMPORARY DISASTER ASSISTANCE FOR SECOND HOME OWNERS & TEMPORARY RESIDENTS

WHEREAS second home owners and temporary residents may be impacted by a local emergency or disaster;

AND WHEREAS current regulations restrict second home owners and temporary residents from accessing emergency social services and other disaster assistance:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Government of British Columbia be requested to amend legislation to permit second home owners and temporary residents access to the same emergency social services and temporary disaster assistance as local residents when impacted by an emergency.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Justice

When individuals have been forced from their homes as a result of a large disaster or an emergency such as a house fire, Emergency Social Services (ESS) helps people meet their basic needs for 72 hours. Services covered under ESS are only available to people who need emergency assistance and do not have sufficient personal resources, such as insurance, family or friends available, and have no other options. ESS is provided to people staying at recreational properties in certain circumstance.

The purpose of BC's Disaster Financial Assistance program is to provide assistance to individuals for their principal residence and to help small business or farm owners when their livelihood is at risk.

The program is not insurance and was never intended to provide assistance to individuals whose secondary or vacation property was damaged. It is expected that if individual's secondary or vacation home has been damaged that they have a principal residence to return to.

Limiting BC's program to only principal residences is consistent with the approach in all other provinces and territories, as well as the federal government guidelines for cost-sharing major disasters. BC is not considering expanding the Disaster Financial Assistance program to include secondary or vacation homes at this time.

B91 PHOTO RADAR IN SCHOOL ZONES

WHEREAS speeding traffic in school and playground zones creates hazard and injury for children;

AND WHEREAS increased police enforcement and volunteer radar reader boards are labour intensive and meet with limited long term success:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM requests the provincial government to change its legislation to permit the use of speed cameras in school and playground traffic zones;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that fine revenue be shared on a negotiated basis between local governments

RESPONSE: Ministry of Justice

Government cancelled photo radar in 2001 because of a policy position that it undermined public confidence in traffic enforcement. Instead, the Province put more police on the streets to deliver targeted enforcement strategies through Integrated Road Safety Units as part of the Enhanced Road Safety program.

In addition, the Traffic Fine Revenue Sharing program returns 100 percent of net traffic fine revenues to municipalities that are directly responsible for paying for policing. These financial resources aid local governments in ensuring community safety and addressing community specific strategic priorities. All traffic fines collected are pooled and then redistributed to municipalities based on the proportion that each municipality pays for its policing costs.

The Province maintains that together, these strategies are more effective than the old photo radar program. That said, there is always an interest in new approaches, including technologies, that might help to make BC roads safer, as well as improving officer safety and efficiency.

B94 CIVIC ELECTION TERM LENGTH IN BC

WHEREAS many provinces, including Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Quebec, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Labrador, Ontario, PEI and New Brunswick, have four-year civic election terms, a term length which reflects the accepted period between elections in the provincial and federal contexts;

AND WHEREAS the 2013 provincial election highlighted a number of issues with regard to local government elected officials running and being elected to the provincial legislature and the lack of legislative direction to avoid governance conflicts, expensive by-elections, long absences on council and boards and the double dipping of salaries;

AND WHEREAS four-year election terms would likely be more productive for councils and staff and would save taxpayer money:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM ask the provincial government to increase the interval between civic elections from three years to four years, and that legislation be passed to do so in time for the 2014 election.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development

Government is considering UBCM's request to change the civic election term length to four years beginning with the November 2014 general civic election. Government does understand that the length of term is an important piece of information for candidates in deciding whether to run for local office and will communicate the decision in early 2014.

B95 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTION CAMPAIGN FINANCE RULES

WHEREAS in 2005, 2009, 2010, and 2012, the City of Vancouver has brought forward formal requests to the Province requesting changes to the *Vancouver Charter* to allow for local governments to create appropriate rules for disclosure and regulation of election campaign finance, which is currently regulated at a standard far lower than provincial or federal elections;

AND WHEREAS the funds used to campaign for elected office in Vancouver have grown exponentially in the seven year interval Vancouver has waited for provincial action on this issue, with the unprecedented case of $960,000 donated to one electoral organization from a single corporation in the 2011 Vancouver local government election;

AND WHEREAS the most recent motion, passed unanimously by Vancouver City Council in January 2012, provoked an informal response from the provincial government that they would be amenable to modernizing municipal election and campaign rules if support from a majority of municipalities was garnered;

AND WHEREAS a motion from Vancouver to the UBCM in 2009 was pre-empted from debate with the establishment of the provincial government's Local Government Election Task Force:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM support Vancouver's request to the provincial government for amendments to the *Vancouver Charter* to allow Vancouver to make rules for election campaign finance that place greater limits on campaign spending and contributions, and provide for greater disclosure.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development

In September 2013, the provincial government released the White Paper on Local Government Elections Reform. The White Paper provided an overview of the intended changes to local elections legislation, as well as the draft *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*. The government committed to introducing legislation that, if passed, will bring the proposed changes into effect for the 2014 local elections. The Act would provide for improved accountability, transparency and enforcement in local elections. Specific proposed changes include:

- Sponsorship information on all election advertising
- Campaign finance disclosure by third party advertisers
- Earlier filing deadline for campaign finance disclosure statements
- Campaign finance disclosure statements centrally available through Elections BC
- Key compliance and enforcement role for Elections BC

The proposed *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act* would apply to all local governments in BC, including the City of Vancouver. Together these changes would bring meaningful improvements to local elections in BC and serve as a strong foundation for introducing expense limits in the next local elections after 2014. The White Paper noted that election expense limits would be explored through a separate stakeholder engagement process beginning in November 2013. The Local Government Elections Task Force recommended that expense limits be established for all BC communities. BC communities range in population from about 180 to 600,000 and the majority do not have elector organizations. Additionally, the local elections legislation applies to boards of education elections. There is significant work to be done to ensure that expense limits would be effective, equitable and enforceable in these different contexts.

As part of working towards expense limits for local elections, the provincial government invited the views of the City of Vancouver and all other local governments during the stakeholder engagement process from November 2013 to January 2014. In addition to specifically seeking the views of local governments, the Province issued a discussion paper on expense limits issues and invited public comment. In developing expense limits, the provincial government will consider the perspectives heard from local governments and other stakeholders, such as the public.

B97 ALL TERRAIN VEHICLE OPERATION ON PUBLIC ROADS

WHEREAS small rural communities could benefit economically as service centres for the growing recreational sport of all terrain vehicle (ATV) touring;

AND WHEREAS legislation in British Columbia currently prohibits the operation of all terrain vehicles on highways, roads and streets for recreational purposes:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the provincial government to amend current legislation to permit local governments to regulate the operation of ATV's on municipal roads and streets within their boundaries.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

The Province is developing an Off Road Vehicle Management Framework. The Ministry of Forests Land and Natural Resource Operations is leading the framework's development and has developed a website http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/mof/orv/.

The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure is responsible for road safety, which includes ensuring that vehicles operating on public roadways meet recognized safety standards. In support of that mandate, all vehicles that operate on public roads in BC must be licensed and insured by ICBC. ATVs do not meet the vehicle safety standards which apply to other motor vehicles that operate on public roadways, so they cannot be operated on public roadways except under specific circumstances for farming, industrial uses, landscaping and maintenance and law enforcement.

In addition, there are no driver licensing requirements for operators of ATVs. Operators are not required to show proficiency on the ATV prior to using and specific conditions, such as a minimum age are not applied.

For these reasons, ATVs are currently not permitted on public roads.

B99 PROVINCIAL FUEL TAX FUNDING FOR ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

WHEREAS local governments are endeavouring to meet greenhouse gas reduction targets set by the provincial government and providing pedestrian and cycling infrastructure is an important component of meeting those targets;

AND WHEREAS local governments have limited revenue sources by which to provide pedestrian and cycling infrastructure to meet gaps in existing networks and transportation links throughout communities;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM recommend to the provincial government that the provincial tax on fuel sales be increased by $0.001 and that the entirety of the proposed increase be allocated to local governments on a per capita basis for infrastructure improvements for active transportation.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Finance

An increase to provincial tax on fuel sales by $0.001 with the entirety of the proposed increased allocated to local governments on a per capita basis for infrastructure improvements for active transportation would have many implications and would need to be carefully considered within the context of the tax system as a whole.

The Province provides grants and other forms of financial assistance to help local governments meet their infrastructure priorities. These programs include targeted capital infrastructure funding programs such as the Building Canada Fund, Towns for Tomorrow and the Community Recreation Program. They also include broader unconditional transfers such as the Climate Action Revenue Incentive Program and the Strategic Community Investment Fund (SCIF), which includes the Traffic Fine Revenue Sharing Program, Small Community and Regional District Grants.

B100 HOST LOCAL GOVERMENT SHARE OF CASINO REVENUES

WHEREAS the British Columbia Lottery Corporation achieved a record net income of $1,107.4 million in 2011/12 based in large part on the rapid growth of e-gaming;

AND WHEREAS casino and community gaming revenues fell short of target by $41 million in the same period, with the host local government share of casino revenues either stagnant or falling;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM, on behalf of all host local governments, seek to increase the percentage return to host local governments through the minister responsible, as these revenues are one of the very few non-property tax sources to directly support local government needs.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Finance

Host local governments receive 10 percent of the net casino gaming revenue from casinos and community gaming centres within their jurisdiction. In 2012/13, these payments totalled $84.5 million across 31 host local governments in British Columbia, an increase of $2.2 million since 2010/11 and an increase of $1.4 million since 2011/12. In addition to this funding provided to local governments, non-profit organizations across British Columbia received community gaming grants totaling approximately $135 million in 2012/13.

Profits from eGaming made up only about 1.5 percent of BCLC's total net income in 2012/13. Further, as overall proceeds from land-based gaming have increased, government has passed the benefits on to citizens through public service priorities, including health care and education.

B101 NEW PROPERTY CLASS FOR LARGE COMMERCIAL ENTITIES

WHEREAS the current property assessment class 06 business/other is a broad class that captures any property use not defined elsewhere;

AND WHEREAS local governments are restricted in managing local taxation policy by the broad nature of the class:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government examine the possibility that an additional property assessment class be added to capture the concept of commercial entity size as a property class for the purposes of property taxation.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development

Government is aware of the diversity and range of property types included in Class 6, Business and Other. While government is not considering changes to the assessment classes for properties at this time, if there is such a review in the future, UBCM's proposal for Class 6 will be considered. It would be helpful in analyzing potential impacts and identifying options in any future review if UBCM could provide a more detailed proposal with specific recommendations for the segregation of specific properties or property types. Note that the Ministry of Finance, Tax Policy Branch, would also be consulted regarding any changes to classifications.

B104 COASTAL DOUGLAS FIR PARTNERSHIP

WHEREAS the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations has established the multiagency Coastal Douglas Fir and Associated Ecosystems Partnership (CDFCP) to provide a strategic and collaborative approach to conservation of these ecosystems and which is intended to be funded by the participants;

AND WHEREAS local governments have limited means to raise revenues outside of property taxes to fund initiatives such as the Coastal Douglas Fir and Associated Ecosystems Partnership:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM urge the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations to ensure the Province adequately resources the CDFCP, including the implementation of recommendations made.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

Over the past several years, the provincial government has taken steps to preserve specific ecosystems within the Coastal Douglas-fir zone. In 2010, 1,598 hectares of provincial Crown land was protected to bring the total amount of provincial Crown land protected in the Coastal Douglas-fir zone to 9,167 hectares—approximately 39 percent of the total amount of Crown land in the zone.

Given that about 80 percent of the Coastal Douglas-fir ecosystem is on private land, the provincial government has limited direct influence. However, ministry staff is working collaboratively with local governments, private landowners and environmental groups to assess the environmental health of the Coastal Douglas-fir zone and examine options to best manage these unique forest ecosystems.

Effective resource management and ecosystem stewardship draws on the expertise of individuals and organizations with specialized knowledge in these fields. The provincial government is a member of the Coastal Douglas-Fir and Associated Ecosystems Conservation Partnership and is working with other members to assess environmental issues and conservation objectives in the region. Over the past year (2013), the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations contributed about $3,000 to help establish the organization and support outreach activities to raise awareness of conservation issues amongst stakeholders, local governments, environmental groups and the general public.

B105 WATERSHED PROTECTION

WHEREAS the majority of Vancouver Island communities draw drinking water from an active working forested watershed;

AND WHEREAS logging companies are not required to submit a long range forestry plan:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province of British Columbia enact legislation that requires all land and tenure holders logging in a local government watershed to have in place a one hundred year cut rotation plan;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all logging companies have environmental policies in place that protect the integrity of local governments' drinking water.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

Before beginning harvesting operations, forestry companies must prepare Forest Stewardship Plans describing how they will meet government objectives for the protection of forest and range values, including water quality. These plans are reviewed by government to ensure that they meet content requirements prior to approval.

Requiring one-hundred-year cut rotation plans would be infeasible, and no evidence suggests that it would improve on water quality regulations already in place. Under current practices, Ministry of Forest, Lands and Natural Resource Operations staff monitor forestry activities to ensure compliance with rules and regulations. They conduct more than 8,000 inspections each year to ensure protection of water and other natural resources.

The provincial government takes water quality very seriously as reflected in the *Forest and Range Practices Act*, the *Drinking Water Protection Act* and other statutes. Regional Health Authorities also employ drinking water officers who liaise with the resource ministries to help manage source water protection.

B106 REMOVAL OF CARBON TAX FROM BIOFUELS

WHEREAS the *Greenhouse Gas Reduction (Renewable and Low Carbon Fuel Requirements) Act* has mandated the reduction of fossil carbon emissions and the use of renewable fuels;

AND WHEREAS the removal of motor fuel tax exemptions and the additional application of the carbon tax to the production and sale of pure (100%) biofuels since 2010 has had a negative impact on biofuel producers and suppliers within BC, and has resulted in a decrease in the availability of pure renewable fuels that have the greatest potential to reduce fossil carbon emissions;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province of BC amend the *Greenhouse Gas Reduction (Renewable and Low Carbon Fuel Requirements) Act* to remove the Carbon Tax from the entire biofuel portion of all fuel production and sales derived from reused oil sources only, and provide further incentives to ensure that the renewable fuel sector continues as a viable industry for BC consumers and supports provincial greenhouse gas reduction objectives.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Finance

The Province remains committed to increasing biofuel use in British Columbia through the Renewable and Low Carbon Fuel Requirement Regulation (RLCFRR).

The Province has recently released a consultation paper regarding part 3 agreements with fuel suppliers under the *Greenhouse Gas Reduction (Renewable and Low Carbon Fuel Requirements) Act*. Once implemented, part 3 agreements will provide further incentive for the use of biofuels in British Columbia.

A carbon tax exemption for the entire biofuel portion of all fuel production and sales derived from reused oil sources only, is not technically or administratively feasible.

The RLCFRR requires that total volumes of diesel fuel supplied in British Columbia contain annual averages for renewable fuel per year for each fuel supplier. In addition, the RLCFRR requires a 10 percent reduction in carbon intensity of fuels by 2020. The RLCFRR is expected to increase the overall demand for biofuels.

As a result of the RLCFRR, the motor fuel tax exemption for biodiesel was no longer needed to incent the use of these fuels. In addition, with suppliers likely needing to vary the blend percentages on a seasonal and/or regional basis to meet the RLCFRR, it would not always be possible to identify the exact proportion of renewable fuel in any given blend and therefore not possible to apply an exemption equitably under the *Motor Fuel Tax Act* and the *Carbon Tax Act*. Therefore, the motor fuel and carbon tax exemptions for biodiesel and ethanol were eliminated.

B107 GOOSE POPULATION CONTROL

WHEREAS the increased Canada Goose population is having negative economic impacts on communities where tourism is a major industry;

AND WHEREAS the egg addling program has had a limited effect on the goose population and is but one tool in the control of the goose population;

AND WHEREAS the Canada Goose is causing health concerns for those using local lakes, beaches, parks, and playing fields, with high coliform counts having been detected in some areas having detrimental effects on the economy, tourism, and health in the communities affected;

AND WHEREAS the British Columbia Hunting Regulations are insufficient to control the increased numbers of geese:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province encourage the Canadian Wildlife Service to be more permissive in the issuance of kill permits, and failing an agreement to do so by Canadian Wildlife Service, that the Province take the initiative to provide kill permits to affected local governments for goose population reduction.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

Canada Geese are migratory waterfowl covered by the federal *Migratory Birds Convention Act*. Although they are also included in the provincial *Wildlife Act*, the senior responsibility for these birds lies with the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS).

Killing permits alone will not solve the long-term problem as geese are prolific breeders. As long as circumstances enable them to be productive, their populations will recover quickly. The Province encourages local governments to consider a variety of management methods to reduce problem goose populations such as egg addling, placing temporary goose fencing around park beaches during the flightless period, approved scare tactics, increased hunt harvesting levels, and modifying landscapes to be less attractive and accessible.

While the provincial government may technically have legal authority under the *Wildlife Act* to issue kill permits for Canada Geese, doing so would not be useful. If the CWS has already issued a permit, it would merely duplicate their efforts. In cases where they have not, a federal permit would still be required. Anyone killing Canada Geese without the necessary federal permit would be committing an offence and be subject to charges.

Resolving nuisance goose problems will require a coordinated effort from all affected stakeholders. The Province would be pleased to participate in such efforts.

B108 NOXIOUS WEEDS & RANGE LANDS

WHEREAS noxious weeds pose a grave threat to the health of the range lands in BC and consequently to their capacity to maintain the native flora and wildlife as well as their capacity to offer grazing to domestic animals;

AND WHEREAS neither the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resources, nor the regional districts have the funding or the personnel necessary to adequately control these weeds; however, ranchers are familiar with their ranges and monitor them continuously:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the Government of BC to do everything possible to assist the ranching community in controlling noxious weeds, including but not limited to simplifying provincial requirements, assisting with the cost of obtaining the pesticide applicator's certificate, and tailoring the course material and timing to ranchers.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

The Province recognizes that invasive plants, including noxious weeds, can cause environmental and economic damage and adversely affect the health and productivity of rangelands. The Province provided $1.7 million in grants in 2013 to local governments, regional invasive species committees and the Invasive Species Council of BC to help combat the spread of invasive plants. This funding is in addition to the $534,000 already allotted for invasive plant control and management in 2013/14.

The Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations has worked closely with the ranching sector to control noxious weeds on Crown land through regional committees, stakeholder engagement and contracts with range tenure holders with valid Pesticide Applicator Certificates and licenses. Appropriate training and successful completion of a written exam is required to obtain a Pesticide Applicator Certificate from the Ministry of Environment. A confirmed Pest Management Plan or license must be in place before invasive plants on Crown land can be treated.

These requirements protect the environment and safeguard public health. Reducing certification requirements would result in increased risks, which would not be in the best interests of British Columbians. The Province is always willing to consider ways to improve the pesticide applicator certification program and make it easier for ranchers and tenure holders to participate.

B111 REGULATION OF FOREIGN OWNERSHIP OF FARMLAND

WHEREAS the financial viability of BC farms is threatened by the rising cost of farmland due in part to speculative acquisition of BC farmland, possibly by foreign investors and investment companies, as recognized in the 2010 publication by Canada's National Farmers Union, Losing Our Grip;

AND WHEREAS BC's food sovereignty is threatened by foreign control of BC food production, and that foreign owners and investment companies could profit from Canadian taxpayer-funded farm subsidies without providing an income for BC farmers nor food for consumption by BC residents:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the Province to:

- Assemble data on current foreign ownership of farm land inside and outside the Agricultural Land Reserve in BC and maintain a registry;
- Support and strengthen the powers of the Agricultural Land Commission and take measures to protect the agricultural land base from price speculation; and
- Take measures to limit foreign and investment company ownership of BC farmland, similar to measures taken in Alberta, Manitoba and Prince Edward Island.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Agriculture

The Ministry of Agriculture is aware that some communities are concerned about the possibility of price speculation by foreign and domestic investors.

It is important to understand that British Columbia is a small, open market economy that is dependent on trade and investment for economic growth and job generation. As such, the Province is open to investment, whether foreign or domestic.

Investment in British Columbia farmland generates potential for increased food production, jobs and economic development as well as increased revenue streams that the Government of British Columbia can invest in areas such as health care, education and infrastructure.

In 2009, agricultural producers and Ministry of Agriculture staff in northern British Columbia reported that a foreign company bought 4000 hectares of land in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) in the Vanderhoof and Peace River Regions for the purpose of planting trees and selling carbon offsets. The company then hired a Toronto-based company to plant trees on the land they purchased. The Ministry is not aware of any other significant purchases of British Columbia farmland by foreign corporations for production of non-agricultural crops.

The Agricultural Land Reserve Use, Subdivision and Procedure Regulation defines timber production, harvesting, silviculture and forest protection as a permitted use for land within the ALR. Some ranchers practice limited logging on their properties to generate secondary income.

Ministry of Agriculture staff and the Agriculture Land Commission (ALC) will continue to monitor the use of farmland for tree production to generate carbon offsets.

If it becomes apparent that a significant amount of ALR land is being contracted for this purpose, and that covenants are being placed on the land to support this, the Ministry of Agriculture and the ALC can take steps to control this activity by establishing that it is one which restricts or prohibits the use of the land for farm purposes under the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*.

B112 PRIVATE MANAGED FOREST LAND ASSESSMENT & CONSULTATION

WHEREAS many owners of private managed forest land are planning for its sale for residential and commercial development rather than committing to long-term forest production;

AND WHEREAS the land is under valuated by BC Assessment:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government be called upon to review the method of land valuation of private managed forest land intended for development and to impose a duty on owners of private managed forest land to consult with the local government in which the land is located.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development

The method of calculating managed forest land assessments produces values based on the land's tree growing capability. Similar to assessments for farm land, this value is not influenced by other market forces. These reduced assessments are a benefit of this classification and are provided to help encourage long-term, sustainable forestry management on private land while maximizing the social, environmental and economic benefits of those practices. Property owners in this class have an obligation to provide good resource management practices, such as reforestation, care of young trees, protection from fire and disease and sound harvesting methods.

If an owner of private managed forest land wants to withdraw from its management commitment, it must give written notice to the Private Managed Forest Land Council of its intention to withdraw its land from this commitment. Unless exempted by regulation, or under specifically prescribed circumstances, an owner must pay an exit fee when the property is removed from managed forest land class. The amount of the exit fee is set out in the Private Managed Forest Land Regulation.

The exit fee is intended to encourage long-term participation in the Managed Forest Program. The exit fee applies to lands that have been assessed as managed forest land for less than 15 years and is calculated based on the difference between actual property taxes paid, and what the property taxes would have been had the property not been assessed as managed forest land (for example residential class), with a discount related to the number of years as managed forest land class.

B113 LANDSCAPE SECURITY

WHEREAS Section 925 of the Local Government Act permits the collection of security for the performance of specified development permit conditions;

AND WHEREAS it is administratively costly for local governments to pursue compliance and impractical to use security to undertake required works or construction on private land:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government amend Section 925 of the Local Government Act to allow local governments to collect a 5 percent per month administrative fee on conditions of a development permit that are deemed to be in default in order to provide further incentive for the developer to satisfy the conditions of a Development Permit.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development

The Province understands that local governments collect security for the performance of specified development permit conditions and that these securities may not always be an effective way to support related administration and work.

Local governments may want to further explore their ability to impose an additional fee for a service that they are providing under their general fee authority in the *Local Government Act* related to development permitting.

It is suggested that local governments consult the development industry and other local governments within their region respecting such a fee.

B115 RESTAURANT LIQUOR LICENSES IN THE AGRICULTURAL LAND RESERVE

WHEREAS winery lounges situated within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) are restricted from selling wine that has been produced off-site, as well as beer and other spirits manufactured and bottled in British Columbia;

AND WHEREAS allowing the sale of wine produced off-site, beers and other spirits manufactured and bottled in British Columbia in winery lounges currently is seen to require a Food Primary Liquor Licence, the approval of the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC), and possible bylaw amendment by local government:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Agricultural Land Reserve Use, Subdivision and Procedure Regulation and the Liquor Control and Licensing Regulation be amended to allow for the sale or service of wine, beer and spirits manufactured and grown in British Columbia in winery lounges as a permitted farm use in the ALR.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Agriculture

Parliamentary Secretary John Yap has completed a review of liquor policy and BC's liquor laws and submitted his report to the Honourable Suzanne Anton, Attorney General and Minister of Justice on November 25, 2013. The goal of his review was to identify balanced, common-sense solutions that improve consumer convenience and grow BC's economy, while keeping health and public safety in mind.

One of Mr. Yap's recommendations addressed this resolution. He recommended Government should consult with the Agricultural Land Commission about amending the Agricultural Land Commission Act regulations to allow manufacturers to sell liquor for on-premise consumption that was not produced on site.

Mr Yap's report will be forwarded to Cabinet in early 2014 for their consideration and publicly released afterwards.

B116 COMMUNITY FOREST MANAGEMENT ZONE FOR WILDFIRE HAZARD REDUCTION

WHEREAS existing federal and provincial funding programs that assist communities in reducing wildland-urban interface fire hazards are inadequate to address the estimated 1.7 million hectares of interface fire hazard lands throughout the province;

AND WHEREAS the ability for local communities to independently manage their adjacent interface hazard zones would support and encourage innovative and effective utilization of the associated forest resources:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM encourage the Province to amend existing forest tenure arrangements to enable the creation of "Community Forest Management Zones for Wildfire Hazard Reduction" in order to accelerate wildfire hazard reduction in forests surrounding BC communities; diversify and increase local forest-based economic and employment opportunities; and support the establishment of a viable bioenergy sector for rural BC communities and the province as a whole.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

The Ministry of Forest, Land and Natural Resource Operations recognizes and supports the need to proactively manage fuel sources around communities to reduce the risk of wildfire impacts. The Ministry is working towards landscape-level fire management planning with three pilot projects in the Cascades and the Vanderhoof, Fort St. James and the Sea-to-Sky Resource Districts to assess high wildfire threats. The Ministry aims to identify strategies to improve the fire resiliency of the land, safeguard communities and protect critical infrastructure.

Using bioenergy to reduce wildfire risks to communities is an attractive option; however, reallocation of fibre, timber volume or establishment of specific management areas would require extensive consultation with internal and external stakeholders. The Ministry believes that the most effective long-term and sustainable solution involves supporting innovation through policy and legislation and building partnerships with the forest industry, the bioenergy sector, BC Timber Sales, local governments, community forest associations, First Nations and other stakeholders.

B117 GROW-OP BYLAW AUTHORITY

WHEREAS illegal marijuana grow operations are a province-wide problem contributing to public safety, community, health and enforcement issues;

AND WHEREAS municipalities, under the Community Charter, have the authority to enact bylaws within their own jurisdictions regulating marijuana grow operations; however, province-wide, these municipal bylaws have a diminished effect as regional districts have not been granted the same authority for electoral areas:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the Ministry of Justice and Attorney General and the Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development to amend the Local Government Act to provide authority to regional districts to enact marijuana grow operations regulatory bylaws in electoral areas.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development

The government of British Columbia recognizes that illicit drug operations where marijuana is grown are a threat to communities through fire risks, organized crime involvement, theft of hydro, environmental damage and concerns for remediation of involved properties.

The Province has responded to the problem of marijuana grow operations in a number of ways including education, legislation, civil action and the establishment of specialized anti-gang police units to combat gangs and gun violence and target grow-operations, drug labs and gang activity. While municipalities generally have broader regulatory authorities than regional districts, section 799 of the *Local Government Act* does provide an opportunity for regional districts to obtain additional powers by Regulation.

The Province will continue to collaborate across agencies to address grow-operations and illegal drug production, including possible civil and regulatory responses targeting those that are behind these operations. Additionally, the Ministries of Justice and Community, Sport and Cultural Development will continue to work together to explore options for local governments.

B118 THIRD PARTY MONITORING OF SEWERAGE INSTALLATIONS ABUTTING FARMLAND

WHEREAS human health and the production of safe and healthy food products for human consumption can be compromised by sewerage system malfunctions or poor design;

AND WHEREAS complaints to BC Health Authorities and the self-regulating professional associations have had poor results due to 1) a lack of regulated third party oversight; and 2) the limited ability to provide oversight with respect to agricultural products:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province require British Columbia Health Authorities to implement third party monitoring of sewerage installations on and abutting farmland or, at minimum, on a random basis.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

The Ministry of Health (the Ministry) is responsible for maintaining and administering the Sewerage System Regulation under the *Public Health Act*. This regulation, passed on July 7, 2004, is based on a professional reliance model which places the responsibility for onsite sewerage system design, installation and maintenance on Registered Onsite Wastewater Practitioners and Professional Engineers. Health authorities are responsible for receiving sewerage system filing applications ('filings') from practitioners and providing statutory enforcement in cases where health hazards arise from failing or malfunctioning systems. The regulations and guidance currently in place are aimed at protecting human health as well as agricultural food products grown on nearby sites.

Over the past year, the Ministry has taken a number of steps to improve regulation and oversight of onsite systems. This includes:

- Partnerships with the Applied Science Technologists and Technicians of BC (ASTTBC) and the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of BC (APEGBC) on developing practice guidelines to improve oversight and assessment of authorized persons under the regulation. APEGBC reports that the number of complaints related to professional practice on sewage systems has dropped significantly as a result.
- The Ministry, along with APEGBC and ASTTBC, developed seminars for authorized persons at five locations (Nanaimo, Nelson, Kamloops, Prince George and Langley) in October and November 2013 to reinforce practice and technical guidance for authorized persons.
- ASTTBC and APEGBC are developing mandatory requirements for continuing professional development and are developing audit programs to review their members.
- ASTTBC has developed a list of competencies for Registered Onsite Wastewater Practitioners which will be used to develop improvements to training programs for onsite sewage planners and installers.

Finally, since onsite systems are land-based systems on individual lots, the Ministry also sees a potentially important role for local government as well. The Ministry has worked with the Ministry of Community Sport and Cultural Development (MCSCD) in the development of their best practices guide for onsite sewage for use by local government and health authorities. Furthermore, some regional districts have introduced bylaws that have significantly improved oversight of maintenances of septic systems. This direction addresses a number of commitments made by a UBCM onsite sewage committee several years ago. The Ministry hopes that MCSCD's best practices document, along with its model bylaws, can encourage more local governments to take a more proactive approach in this area.

B119 WATER QUALITY TESTING

WHEREAS the BC health authorities are considering changes to the testing procedures for recreational water based upon the 3rd Edition of the Guidelines for Canadian Recreational Water Quality published by Health Canada;

AND WHEREAS the new guidelines advise the issuing of a beach water quality advisory after a single sample maximum concentration of 400 E.coli/100ml which may result in significantly more beach water advisories but may not result in a significant benefit to public health:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that BC health authorities refrain from adopting the new Health Canada 3rd Edition Guidelines for Canadian Recreational Water Quality.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

The Guidelines for Canadian Recreational Water Quality, released by Health Canada in 2012, replace the 1992 version of the guidelines of the same title.

The Ministry of Health have reviewed the District of Kelowna's resolution, which interprets the guidelines as advising "the issuing of a beach water quality advisory after a single sample maximum concentration of 400 E.coli is taken." and determined that the District's interpretation is inconsistent with the advice in the 2012 Guidelines for Canadian Recreational Water Quality.

The 2012 Guideline (page 26) reads:

Geometric mean concentration (minimum of five samples): ≤ 200 E. coli/100 mL
Single-sample maximum concentration: ≤ 400 E. coli/100 mL

Calculation of the geometric mean concentration should be based on a minimum of five samples, collected at times and sites so as to provide representative information on the water quality likely to be encountered by users. Further action should be initiated if either of these guideline values is exceeded. Minimum action should consist of immediate re-sampling of the site(s). In addition, a swimming advisory may be issued should the responsible authority identify that the area is not suitable for recreational water use.

Page 18 of the 2012 Guidelines also provides the following advice:

Most bodies of water used for recreational purposes are not completely homogeneous with respect to their microbiological properties. In recreational water evaluations, the purpose of sampling is to obtain aliquots that are as representative as possible of microbiological quality of the area. A single water sample provides a quantitative estimate of the indicator bacteria present at a particular site and time. Whitman and Nevers (2004) observed that there can be significant variation between samples collected at multiple points along the beach, as well as among samples collected within close proximity to each other at nearly the same time. As the total number of samples increases, the more representative the data will be of the overall water quality.

Page 21 advises:

Issuing a swimming advisory or a beach closure should be made by the Medical Officer of Health or other appropriate authority in accordance with the statutes existing in each province or territory. This decision should be based on a thorough assessment of the situation with information provided by recreational water monitoring, the Environmental Health and Safety Survey and existing public health surveillance.

Given the rationale in the guidelines, it is not anticipated that health authorities would base a closure of a beach on any single sample result, nor would a local government base an entire beach sampling program on a single sample. This approach is consistent with the previous 1992 guidelines which advises that "Re-sampling should be performed when any sample exceeds 4000 E.Coli/L (400 E.coli/100mL)". Based on this information, it does not appear that the new guidelines will result in significantly more beach water advisories. The Ministry of Health supports health authorities in adopting the 2012 guidelines.

B120 EARLY INTERVENTION CENTRES FOR MENTAL HEALTH & ADDICTION

WHEREAS the Mental Health Commission of Canada developed a framework for a national Mental Health Strategy in response to the growing mental health problem in Canada;

AND WHEREAS police departments across Canada have become the front line response for many mental health related crises as a costly alternative to proactive, harm-reduction approaches;

AND WHEREAS there are many instances where mental health patients that have been attended to by the police and emergency services are released back onto the streets without adequate support:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province of British Columbia be requested to work with the federal government and local governments to establish early intervention centres where a person suffering mental health issues or substance and drug abuse can be housed or assigned, when a doctor feels that a person may do harm to himself/herself or others.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

The Province of British Columbia (the Province) is committed to providing the best supports for people facing challenges associated with mental health and substance use problems. Health authorities have developed a continuum of mental health and substance use services including crisis response and emergency mental health and substance use services such as Crisis Lines, Mobile Crisis response teams, Community Crisis Stabilization beds and partnerships between health and police services. As well, the Province has 872 inpatient psychiatric beds located in acute care hospitals providing treatment for people with severe forms of mental illness and substance problems and annually over 22,400 people are treated in these facilities and supported in the community following discharge.

The provincial *Healthy Minds, Healthy People: A Ten-Year Plan to Address Mental Health and Substance Use in British Columbia* takes a whole systems approach to mental health promotion, prevention of mental illness and problematic substance use, early intervention, harm reduction and care, treatment and supported recovery. Priority has been given in the Plan for improved and coordinated responses for people experiencing mental health and substance use problems who are in contact with the criminal justice system.

In response, the Province is actively working with common stakeholders including health authorities, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation, BC Housing, Forensic Psychiatric Services Commission and police agencies to explore priority issues in response to provincial priority. Targeted work is underway to determine the demographics of this identified population, analysis of key issues and identification of best practice approaches with the intention of improving services, outreach and supports to clients with severe mental health and substance use issues, including those who may pose a risk to the public and/or themselves.

Specific provincial initiatives are presently underway to better support people with mental health and substance use problems in contact with the criminal justice system, including police. These inter-ministerial initiatives aim to improve continuity between the health and the justice systems of care through the provision of appropriate services, integrated planning, improved service linkages and enhanced information sharing. This work includes the development of a provincial framework, information sharing and transition protocols for individuals experiencing mental health and substance use problems and in contact with provincial corrections. In addition, an overarching provincial police-health framework will provide guidance in the development of local/ regional protocols for people experiencing a mental health and substance use crisis that come into contact with police. This framework will build on existing best practices and evidence-based models of care.

A number of local initiatives involve partnerships with Mental Health and Substance Use (MHSU) services and local police agencies with the aim to improve service delivery and response for individuals experiencing mental illness and/or substance use problems both in the community and the emergency department. The development of protocols between local hospital emergency and police departments in Vancouver Coastal Health Authority and Fraser Health Authority (FHA) include changes to the sharing of information between police and the hospital emergency department and intake process of mental health patients detained under section 28 of the *Mental Health Act*. This results in more streamlined patient intake processes, reduced wait times for police and facilitation of more timely and comprehensive patient care. In addition there are collaborative initiatives improving the support, urgent response and follow up to individuals in mental health and substance use crisis situations such as the New Westminster Community Health Intervention Partnership between the FHA and the New Westminster Police Department through a dedicated police officer and designated mental health professionals.

This work will result in strengthened MHSU services and supports through an integrated and coordinated approach that responds to the individual care needs of the patient. This will assist in the reduction of MHSU crises and involvement with the criminal justice system.

B121 REINSTATING RIVERVIEW

WHEREAS the lack of adequate treatment and housing for those suffering from serious or severe mental illness is a reality experienced province wide, resulting in a less efficient system, with unacceptably poor outcomes for the most needy citizens of BC, as well as severe financial and social burdens on local communities;

AND WHEREAS the Riverview facilities and grounds have a proven history of providing a very suitable environment for such treatment and housing, with much of the necessary infrastructure already in place:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government immediately begin to undertake all necessary action, including funding, to reinstate Riverview as a patient-centred, wrap around care, modern centre of excellence for mental health care and support.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

Government is committed to providing the best supports for people facing challenges associated with mental illness and or substance use. That is why the Ministry of Health has made it a priority to build a comprehensive system of mental health and substance use services across the Province.

The Province committed a total of $138 million of capital funding to building or expanding tertiary care mental health facilities in communities around BC as part of the Riverview Redevelopment Project. A total of 826 community-based tertiary care replacement beds have been developed throughout the Province of British Columbia offering former Riverview patients better living environments, closer to their home communities and regions.

Current mental health research suggests that individuals living with serious and persistent mental illness respond better to care in smaller, community-based facilities rather than in large institutions. Decentralizing specialized mental health care for people with serious mental health problems brings the care and support that they need closer to their homes and into their communities.

In addition to the 826 community-based tertiary care beds, new adult community based residential care beds have been developed for people with severe mental illness and concurrent substance use problems. Since 2001 the number of community mental health residential care beds has increased from 4,940 beds to 9,835 beds, an increase of 99 percent. Since 2006 the number of adult substance use community beds has increased from 880 to 2,479, an increase of 182 percent.

In terms of the Riverview lands, government is now developing a heritage conservation plan for the lands. Public consultation began in May 2012 and BC Housing expects to begin broader consultation for the future land use planning in 2014.

The public, local government, First Nations and other stakeholders will have a say on the future of the Riverview lands. The information in the Heritage Conservation Plan will also be considered. Any future plans for the land will recognize and respect their key features—both natural and built heritage. Local government, the Kwikwetlem First Nation, and other stakeholders will be informed when a timeline for consultation and associated steps are established.

B122 FUNDING FOR HOSPICE CARE

WHEREAS hospice societies provide important, caring and cost-effective end-of-life services for the dying and their families;

AND WHEREAS the provincial *Hospital District Act* prohibits regional hospital districts from requisitioning funds to support hospices and partnering with provincial health authorities on hospice service delivery:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the *Hospital District Act* be amended to provide enabling legislation authorizing regional hospital districts to requisition funds to support the capital costs of hospice societies and centres located within a regional hospital district.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Health

While the Ministry of Health (the Ministry) is not in a position at this time to provide assurances of legislative amendments, section 49 of the *Hospital District Act* provides the ability for a Regional Hospital District (RHD) to request that a facility be designated a health facility for the purposes of RHD cost sharing. Each request is reviewed by the Ministry on its own merit.

To begin that process, the RHD needs to apply to the Ministry for such designation and the application needs to include:

- Meeting minutes from the RHD board granting their support to have the hospice designated as a health facility under
- A letter of support for designation from the local health authority.
- Evidence that the hospice has established a non-profit society as an agency accountable for receiving and administering public funds.

The Ministry's and the health authority's support for the designation of the hospice as a health facility for the purposes of the RHD cost sharing is not a commitment of future provincial or health authority funding towards the capital or operations of that facility.

B128 MAINTAINING ACCESS TO OUR PROVINCIAL PARK SYSTEM

WHEREAS our provincial park system represents an invaluable public asset, supports the integrity of our economic, social, and family structures, promotes the physical well-being of our citizens, and a healthy and diverse environment;

AND WHEREAS ever-diminishing road access to our communities' provincial parks is currently enabled by abandoned and unmaintained logging roads:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that forest service roads which currently provide, or have formerly provided, public access to provincial parks, be designated, improved and maintained by the provincial government as public highways.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

The Province remains committed to maintaining access to provincial parks; however, maintaining roads to provincial public highway standards is not appropriate for provincial parks access in all circumstances. Some recreation areas are intentionally rustic and increasing vehicle access could negatively impact the natural values which parks are designated to protect.

Decisions on what Forest Service Roads are maintained take into consideration a number of factors, including what recreational areas are accessed by them, how popular those sites are and what type of access is needed consistent with provincial parks planning objectives.

Given limited resources, the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations focuses its Forest Service Road maintenance budget on maintaining high public use roads - notably, roads providing access to community and rural residences and established high-value recreational areas in coordination with BC Parks.

B130 SUPPORT FOR RAISE THE RATES COALITION

WHEREAS Raise the Rates is a coalition of community groups and organizations concerned with the level of poverty and homelessness in British Columbia;
although the poverty rate for people of all ages in BC fell slightly to 11.5 percent in 2010 from 12 percent in 2009, the province has had the worst poverty rate in Canada for 12 consecutive years and the worst child poverty rate in Canada for the past eight years;
a 2011 report estimated the cost of poverty in BC at $8.1 - $9.2 billion a year wasted on health care, the justice system and in lost economic opportunities, with equally significant social costs:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM support the Raise the Rates Coalition in urging the provincial government to:

remove arbitrary barriers that prevent people in need from receiving provincial income assistance such as the 2-year independence test and 3-week work search;
end claw-backs that prevent people from supplementing their welfare with paid work and single parents receiving support from the absent parent up to the Market Basket Measure; and
increase provincial income assistance rates to the Market Basket Measure, the minimum monthly cost required for food, shelter and transportation.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation

Income and disability assistance is intended to help eligible British Columbians temporarily while they look for work and to provide support for those who are not able to work due to a disability. Eligibility requirements such as the 2-year independence test and the work search are intended to ensure that individuals actively look for work and pursue self reliance prior to relying on income assistance. The Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation (Ministry) recognizes that these requirements must be flexible enough to accommodate the unique needs of individuals receiving assistance. There are several exemptions in place to ensure that vulnerable individuals (e.g., those fleeing abuse) can receive immediate assistance.

In October 2012, the Province introduced a $200 earnings exemption for all expected-to-work clients to give employable individuals a chance to build job skills and experience, take advantage of short-term or temporary work and better provide for their families while receiving assistance. The earnings exemption for Persons with Disabilities was also increased from $500 to $800 for a single individual and from $750 to $1,600 for a couple or family. Deducting family maintenance payments, which is consistent across Canada with the exception of Quebec and Alberta's AISH program, ensures that individuals are accessing all other forms of income before relying on assistance. For individuals on assistance who are receiving monthly family maintenance payments, the Ministry may provide a top-up to ensure that an individual's total monthly income is equal to current assistance rates.

Rates need to be sustainable and at a level that provides an incentive for employable clients to find and keep full-time jobs. The Province must also balance what is fair to individuals seeking assistance and what can be supported by the current fiscal plan.

The current rate structure takes into account all provincial and federal tax credits, child benefits and other available programs and support for low-income families and families on income and disability assistance. All clients are eligible for health and other supplementary benefits to meet a variety of unexpected or additional needs and Persons with Disabilities clients receive significant additional health benefits, including dental and optical coverage and medical supplies and equipment.

Although the Province is not in a financial position to consider a rate increase at this time, exploring innovative, low-cost ways to improve services to people receiving assistance continues. The new policies implemented in October 2012, have allowed people receiving assistance, especially families with children, to increase their monthly income. Government will continue to work with communities, stakeholders and individuals to explore other initiatives to improve the income and disability assistance system.

B131 WORKPLACE BULLYING & HARASSMENT

WHEREAS every working person has the right to be treated with respect and dignity in their workplace;

AND WHEREAS workplace bullying/harassment has become an internationally recognized occupational health and safety issue;

AND WHEREAS it has been estimated that workplace bullying/harassment costs the Canadian economy billions of dollars a year;

AND WHEREAS workplace bullying/harassment continues to cause both mental and physical illness, loss of employment, long-term psychological trauma, and impacts both personal and professional wellbeing;

AND WHEREAS British Columbia can be a role model in creating and maintaining productive work environments that benefit people, business and society as a whole;

AND WHEREAS the local governments of British Columbia are committed to the elimination of workplace bullying/harassment of all kinds, and are further committed to increasing awareness about resources to combat workplace bullying/harassment:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM call upon citizens, businesses and governments to take a stand against bullying/harassment in British Columbia workplaces.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training and Minister Responsible for Labour

The Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training and Minister Responsible for Labour, which is responsible for WorkSafeBC and the *Workers Compensation Act*, takes the safety of all workers in British Columbia most seriously.

Government has recognized that it is important to treat job-related mental disorders the same way physical illness and injuries are treated. Mental disorders have a significant impact on workers, their families and the workplace.

Government passed Bill 14, *Workers Compensation Amendment Act*, 2011, in May 2012. The primary change was to amend the mental stress provisions of the *Workers Compensation Act*, which previously compensated acute reactions to a single, sudden and traumatic event, but excluded chronic stress conditions arising from the workplace.

The *Workers Compensation Act* now provides that mental disorders resulting from one or more traumatic events, as well as mental disorders resulting from significant work related stressors such as bullying and harassment (i.e., chronic stress), are now compensated. There is explicit recognition of bullying or harassment as significant work-related stressors that can result in a compensable mental disorder. Government made its position on bullying and harassment clear by stating that these destructive behaviours are simply not acceptable at any level.

As part of this initiative, WorkSafeBC was tasked with developing a policy on bullying and harassment under the existing Occupational Health and Safety Regulation to prevent and address this behavior in the workplace. WorkSafeBC's Board of Directors approved this policy at its March 2013 meeting and WorkSafeBC has posted the approved policy on its website and has sent e-news notifications to over 10,000 stakeholders in BC. The policy becomes effective on November 1, 2013. Like all other employers in BC, municipalities are also responsible for ensuring that they adhere to this policy.

WorkSafeBC is also developing a workplace toolkit to assist workers and employers in understanding, preventing and addressing bullying and harassment in the workplace.

B134 MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

WHEREAS Northeast BC has a significant natural gas resource expected to yield far in excess of 100 years' needs, with the resource providing an opportunity to fuel and fund the province in a debt-free and sustainable manner that will provide for enhanced physical infrastructure, health, education and social progress for several generations;

AND WHEREAS Norway, having a population and resources similar to the province of BC, has managed their resources to the extent that it is the second wealthiest country in the world:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request that the Province of BC continue an examination of the factors that Norway employs in managing its resources for the betterment of its citizens with the goal of adopting a similar approach in BC.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Natural Gas Development and Minister Responsible for Housing

The Ministries of Finance and Natural Gas Development have reviewed the tax and royalty regimes of key jurisdictions with capacity to support LNG production. The review concluded that BC can support an LNG tax thereby maximizing benefits to British Columbians while remaining globally competitive.

The BC Natural Gas Strategy and LNG Strategy detail commitments to competitiveness and market diversification as a means to maximize resource benefits back to the Crown. Key elements to competitiveness for natural gas that the Province is working toward including, maintaining and improving our competitive business environment, a modern regulatory framework, improvements to infrastructure, a competitive taxation and royalty regime, including targeted royalty programs.

Norway has demonstrated leadership in establishing and sustaining a successful non-renewable resource wealth fund for their future generations. The Province has been actively examining Norway's management of its non-renewable resources including a review of their Sovereign Wealth Fund. The Province will continue to learn from Norway and other jurisdictions, and apply best practices to managing BC's non-renewable resources.

The BC government will continue to track and, where applicable, identify and consider best practices in oil and gas management employed in other jurisdictions.

B139 HERITAGE WEEK

WHEREAS BC Heritage Week is held during the third week of February when weather conditions are generally poor;

AND WHEREAS a later date would provide weather conditions more conducive to the showcasing of heritage sites, and to the tourism opportunities associated with heritage:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request that the Province of BC move the date of BC Heritage Week to later in the year.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

Heritage Week in BC currently coincides with National Heritage Day, which was established in 1973 to fall on the third Monday in February.

Each province and community is free to plan heritage events to suit their needs and schedules, but from the perspective of nationwide consistency, Heritage Canada The National Trust recommends that events coincide with the national celebration. Heritage Canada The National Trust understands that poor weather conditions in February can negatively impact heritage plans and may consider moving National Heritage Day later in the year at the next National Council Meeting.

The provincial government understands UBCM's interest in moving BC Heritage Week to provide better weather conditions for showcasing our heritage sites. Heritage BC advises that plans for Heritage Week 2014 are already underway; however, they are polling their members on their support for moving Heritage Week in future years. The Heritage Branch staff will review and consider feedback from Heritage BC.

B140 STANDARDIZATION OF SOCIAL ASSISTANCE RATES

WHEREAS married couples receive less support on disability, welfare, and/or old age security than they would if they were single individuals, thereby decreasing their ability to live with security and dignity, as protected under the Canadian *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*;

AND WHEREAS this practice is discriminatory, and therefore violates the guarantee of equality set out in the Canadian *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the provincial and federal governments to award equal financial support to individuals on disability, welfare and/or old age security regardless of their marital status.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation

The BC Employment and Assistance program provides assistance as a payer of last resort and provides the minimum required support and shelter. Clients whom the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation (Ministry) considers to be spouses are expected to share resources, to support one another and achieve extra economies of scale from two persons being in a relationship of ongoing financial interdependence. The Ministry considers two persons to be spouses if they are married or living in a marriage-like relationship. That is why, when compared to two singles, the Ministry provides a lower rate of assistance to spouses.

This framework is a common aspect of many social programs across Canada

B141 FIRE INSURANCE RATES

WHEREAS fire insurance rates for property owners have increased dramatically in the last few years and the insurance companies have proposed reducing the distance from firehalls for which they provide reduced insurance rates;

AND WHEREAS several large insurance companies have amalgamated to restrict consumers' competitive choice:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the Province of British Columbia to permit the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia to issue property owners' insurance.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

The Province supports the role of the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia (ICBC) in providing Basic compulsory auto insurance coverage to all motorists in British Columbia. Government has no plans to have ICBC operating in any insurance markets other than automobile insurance. Any concerns about the operations of private sector property insurance companies could be brought to an organization such as the Insurance Council of BC, whose mandate is to provide a level of protection to the public pertaining to the sale of insurance products and services under the framework provided by the *Insurance Act*.

LR1 FAIRNESS & BALANCE IN THE BC *HERITAGE* CONSERVATION ACT

WHEREAS private property owners and local governments are involved in heritage conservation issues both as fee simple property owners and as part of local government building and development permit processes;

AND WHEREAS unregistered or undiscovered archaeological sites can result in significant heritage investigation and conservation costs as a prerequisite to property development, as well as significant and costly delays due to additional permits and inspections:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM work with the Province of British Columbia to formulate amendments to the BC *Heritage Conservation Act* that provide fair, balanced and reasonable treatment of property owners who are impacted by unregistered or undiscovered archaeological sites on fee simple property.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

The provincial government remains committed to the protection of BC's heritage resources. Given the extensive history of BC and significant presence of First Nations settlements, property owners and developers must be aware of the potential for finding artifacts and archaeological sites when planning or constructing new developments.

The "developer pays" principle is long established in BC and similar to other Canadian jurisdictions. The permitting process administered by the Archaeology Branch is the same for all landowners. Developers and property owners need to understand their legal obligations whenever relics or archaeological sites are discovered.

LR9 HOWE SOUND MANAGEMENT PLAN

WHEREAS all local governments around Howe Sound are currently dealing with recent multiple referrals and applications for gravel, liquid natural gas, coal and bitumen;

AND WHEREAS Howe Sound is a sensitive, ecologically significant area of unparalleled scenic beauty, and provides important ecosystem services for various First Nations, senior and local governments, and is without a land and marine use plan to facilitate a coordinated approach to land and marine use planning;

AND WHEREAS there has been no discussion between the local governments and the Squamish First Nation regarding the cumulative potential impacts;

AND WHEREAS there is a growing concern regarding the future of Howe Sound as commercial, industrial and recreational uses expand without an approach for assessing the cumulative impacts of those increased uses, thereby putting recent progress of significant ecosystem recovery at risk:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM urge the provincial government to support the development of a Comprehensive Management Plan for Howe Sound that facilitates a coordinated land and marine use planning process between First Nations, senior and local governments, and other local bodies to ensure ongoing recovery and responsible land use planning within Howe Sound.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

British Columbia's future prosperity depends on a strong economy across multiple resource sectors as well as a healthy and sustainable environment supported by a robust regulatory regime. As such, the Province shares local governments' and First Nations' commitment to balancing economic, environmental and social objectives in the Howe Sound area. To this end, government's current environmental assessment process requires the review of cumulative impacts of resource development.

In the South Coast Region, which includes Howe Sound, 37 percent of the land base has been designated for parks, protected areas and conservation areas. The Province supports the development of a management plan and look forward to offering appropriate assistance.

OF1 MARTIN MARS WATER BOMBER

WHEREAS the Martin Mars water bomber has served the British Columbia Forest Service since 1960, and is the largest "direct attack" fire suppression aircraft in the world and without the Mars, the British Columbia Forest Service has no direct attack airplanes to fight urban interface wildfires;

AND WHEREAS the contract between the BC Forest Service and Coulson Group, the operator of the Mars, expired on August 31, 2013, leaving communities in BC without protection provided by the Mars:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province of British Columbia be urged to renew the contract with Coulson Group and retain the Martin Mars water bomber as part of its fire suppression program in the interests of its effectiveness in direct attacks, delivery cost, its long-term utility and its ability to create safe zones through strategic drops.

RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

Airtankers, helicopters and water bombers have all played important roles in fighting wildfires in British Columbia. As fire fighting technology has improved, the Wildfire Management Branch has responded appropriately by obtaining or contracting new equipment and resources to ensure that British Columbia communities are protected from wildfire risks.

A request for proposal was advertised in fall 2013 to contract the services of a multi-aircraft amphibious airtanker group, which would be added to the existing fleet of twelve land-based airtankers. Any company capable of meeting the request for proposal requirements was welcome to make a submission. If a suitable proposal is received, the provincial government expects to sign a contract before the start of the 2014 fire season.